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**Anarchists in the Russian
Revolution**

(Introduction)

ANARCHISTS IN THE REVOLUTION

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The Revolution shook all the classes and strata of Russian social life. A vast unrest had permeated all levels of Russian society as a result of three centuries of oppression on the part of Tzarist regime. This unrest became, during the revolutionary explosion, the force which cemented the heterogeneous elements into a powerful united front, and which annihilated the edifice of despotism within three days, a brief revolutionary period, unprecedented in history.

Within this movement, notwithstanding the fact that its component forces were actuated by different, and often mutually, exclusive tasks and purposes, reigned full unanimity. At the moment of revolutionary explosion the aims of those various forces happened to coincide since they were negative in character, being directed at the annihilation of the superannuated absolutist regime. The constructive aims were not clear yet. It was only in the further course of development, in connection with the diverse constructions placed upon the aims and tasks of the revolution, that a process of crystallization of the hitherto amorphous forces set in and that a struggle began among them for the triumph of their ideas and objectives.

It is a characteristic and noteworthy feature of the revolution that notwithstanding the rather small influence exercised by the Anarchists upon the masses prior to its outbreak, it nevertheless followed from its very beginning the Anarchistic course of full decentralization; the revolutionary bodies immediately pushed to the fore by the course of revolution were Anarcho-Syndicalist in their essential character. These were of the kind which lend themselves as adequate instrumentalities for the quickest realization of the Anarchist ideal — Soviets, factory committees, peasant land committees and house committees, etc. The inner logic of the development and growth of such organizations led in November (October) 1917, to the temporary extinction of the state and the sweeping away of the foundations of capitalist economy.

I say temporary, for in the long run the state and capitalism came to triumph; the logical development of the revolution having

been openly frustrated by those who at first were instrumental in accelerating its course of development. Unchecked by the too-trustful masses, whose aims and course of action, though felt instinctively, were yet far from being clearly realized, the Bolsheviks, to the extent that they gained the confidence of those masses, gradually enveloped the revolution with the chilling atmosphere of state dominance and brute force, thus dooming the revolution to an inevitable process of decay. This process, however, became noticeable only six months after the "October revolution". Up to that moment the revolution kept on ripening. The struggle became sharper and the objectives began to assume an ever clearer and more outspoken character. The country seethed and overbubbled, living a full life under conditions of freedom.

The struggle of classes, groups and parties for preponderant influence in the revolution was intense, powerful and striking in character. As a result of this struggle there was obtained a sort of stalemate of forces; none of them was in the position of commanding superiority in relation to the rest of the struggling forces. This in turn made it impossible for the state and government — the external force standing above society — to become the instrumentality of one of the contending forces. The state, therefore, was paralyzed, not being able to exert its negative influence upon the course of events, the more so that the army, due to its active part in the movement, ceased to be an obedient instrument of the state power. In this grand struggle of interests and ideas the Anarchists took an active and lively part.

The period lasting from February to October-November, 1917, was in its sweep and scope of events a most resplendent period for Anarcho-Syndicalist and Anarchist work, that is for propaganda, agitation, organization and action.

The revolution opened wide the door to the Anarchist emigres returning from various countries, where they had fled to escape the ferocious persecutions of the Tzar's government. But even prior to the return of those emigres there arose, with the active participation of Anarchists released from prisons and exile, groups and unions of Anarchists as well as Anarchist publications. With the return of the Anarchists from abroad. This work began to pick up considerable momentum. Russia was covered with a thick, albeit too loosely connected net of groups. There was hardly a sizeable city which did not have an Anarcho-Syndicalist or an Anarchist group. The prop-

aganda took on dimensions which were unprecedented for Anarchist activity in Russia. Proportionately, there was a great number of Anarchist newspapers, magazines, leaflets, pamphlets and books. The book market was flooded with Anarchist literature. The interest shown toward Anarcho-Syndicalism and Anarchism was enormous, reaching even the remote corners of the far away North.

Newspapers were published not only in the large administrative and industrial centers, like Moscow and Petrograd, which had several Anarchist newspapers (in Petrograd the circulation of the Anarcho-Syndicalist "Golos Trouda" and the Anarchist "Burevestnik" was 25,000 each; the Moscow daily "Anarchia" had about the same circulation), but also in provincial cities, like Kronstadt, Yaroslavl, Nizhni-Novgorod, Saratov, Samara, Krasnoyarsk, Vladivostok, Rostov on Don, Odessa and Kiev.*)

The oral propaganda was even more extensive than the written propaganda — it was carried on in the army as well as in factories and villages. The propaganda revolved around the central task of bringing out and carrying to the logical end the Anarchist principles and tendencies inherent in the revolution. This propaganda, Anarcho-Syndicalist propaganda especially, was very successful with the toilers. The influence of Anarchism, especially of its Anarcho-Syndicalist variety, was so great with the Petrograd proletariat that the Social-Democrats were compelled to issue a special publication for the purpose of waging a struggle against "Anarcho-Syndicalism among the organized proletariat." Unfortunately this influence was not organized.

The influence of Anarcho-Syndicalism manifested itself creditably in the struggle for supremacy waged by the factory committees against the trade unions. The factory committees were almost completely swayed by a unique sort of Anarcho-Syndicalism; this is attested to by all the conferences of the Petrograd factory committees, and likewise by the All-Russian conferences of said committees. Moreover, the Bolsheviks, in their drive toward seizure of power and dictatorship, were forced to cast away (for the time being only, as the subsequent events have proven), their orthodox Marxism and to accept Anarchist slogans and methods. Alas, this was but a tactical move on their part, and not a genuine change of program. It was a

*) In 1918, Anarchist papers were coming out in: Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, Chermbar, Ekaterinburg, Kursk, Ekaterinoslav, Viatka.

cunning fraud was perpetrated upon the mass of Anarchists who at present are paying their sad price for the "errors" allowed by them. The price is now being paid in terms of persecutions — and most ferocious persecution was inflicted upon the Anarchists at the hands of the Bolsheviks. But was it possible to forestall this "error"? The Anarchists could not have avoided it for the following reasons: the Bolsheviks abandoned not only the theory of the gradual dying away of the state, but the Marxist ideology as a whole. At the time the Bolsheviks were indeed revolutionists and Anarchists of a sort. In addition, they were organized, while the Anarchists were not.

The slogans which the Bolsheviks formulated in a precise and intelligible manner the demands of the masses in revolt, coinciding with the slogans of the Anarchists: "Down with the war," "Immediate peace, without annexations and contributions, over the heads of the governments and capitalists," "Abolition of army," "Arming of workers," "Immediate seizure of land by the peasants," "Seizure of factories by the workers," "A Federation of Soviets," etc. Wouldn't the realization of those great slogans lead to the full triumph of the Anarchist ideology, to the sweeping away of the basis and foundations of Marxism? Wasn't it quite natural for the Anarchists to be taken in by those slogans, considering that they lacked a strong organization to carry out these slogans independently? They were swept in by the joint struggle, and in the process of this struggle, especially after the Bolsheviks had triumphed many of the Anarchists were not aware of the cautious and gradual betrayal, of the gradual falling back upon the Bolsheviks, wanted Social-Dem. and Marxist positions. Anarchists deemed this or any other withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the revolutionary positions as being somewhat in the nature of a mere chance thing or an error. Consequently, they continued taking part in the joint struggle. But reality soon proved that all those recessions were no casual things, but moves in a rigorously thoughtout tactical plan directed against the vital interests and demands of the masses — in a plan designed to carry out in life the dead dogma of a disintegrated Marxism. The true face of the Bolsheviks was revealed by the Commissar of National Affairs — Stalin (Dzhugashvili), who wrote in one of his articles (April, 1918) that their aim is "to arrive at centralism via federalism." Persistently, cautiously the revolution was being forced into Marxist channels in accordance with a preconceived plan. Such a channel is for every popular revolution a Procrustean bed.

Thus, during the period of the Bourgeois and Bourgeois-Socialist Government, the Anarchists worked (not organizationally of course) hand in hand with the Bolsheviks. How were the Anarchists situated during that period? The listing of the cities where Anarchist publications came out will show that freedom of the press was of the most extensive kind. Not a single newspaper was closed, not a single leaflet, pamphlet or book were confiscated, not a single rally or mass meeting was forbidden. Notwithstanding the seizure of the rich private houses, like the Durnovo Villa and other mansions in Petrograd; notwithstanding the seizure of printing shops including the printing shop of "Russkaya Volia", published by the Tzar's minister, Protopopov; notwithstanding the overt incitation for insubordination and appeals to soldiers to leave the fronts; notwithstanding all that, there were only a few cases where Anarchists were manhandled which might be construed as connivance by authorities or premeditated acts. Such cases were, for instance, the lynching of the Anarchist Loshkov, whose anti-war propaganda incited the mobs against him as "a German Spy". Another case was the raid carried out by the Junkers (students of officer-in-training schools) against the Anarchists in the Durnovo villa, attended by the murder of Asnin and the arrest of a few other Anarchists. Such was the situation of the Anarchists prior to the October revolution. True, the government, at that period, was not altogether averse to dealing severely with both Anarchists and Bolsheviks. Kerensky threatened many a time to "burn them out with red hot irons". But the government was powerless because the revolution was in full tide.

How did the position of the Anarchists change with the triumph of the October revolution, in the preparation and the making of which they had taken such a prominent part? It is to be pointed out that during the Kerensky period the Anarchists had grown considerably and that toward the October days the Anarchist movement had already assumed considerable proportions. This growth became even more accelerated after the October revolution, following which the Anarchists took an active part in the direct struggle against both the counter-revolution and against the German-Austrian troops. Not only did the voice of Anarchists command attention, but the masses actually followed the appeals and directions of the Anarchists, having come to see in those appeals the concrete formulation of their age-long aspirations, wishes and longings. That is why they backed the demands of an Anarcho-Syndicalist character, carrying out these

demands in the face of the hamstringing efforts, rather feeble at that time, on the part of the Bolsheviks.

How true it is, one can judge by the following facts:

Anarcho-Syndicalist propaganda, verbal and written, correctly evaluated the role and place of the House Committee in the revolution, already during the period of the Bourgeois-Socialist government.*) Under the influence of this propaganda there began in Petrograd a process of spontaneous socialization of houses by the house committees. This process extended to entire streets, bringing into existence street committees, and block committees, when entire blocks were drawn in. This process spread to other cities. In Kronstadt it started even earlier than in Petrograd and reached even higher intensity. If in Petrograd, as well as in other cities, the dwellings were socialized only upon the triumph of the October revolution, in Kronstadt similar steps were taken before, under the influence of Yartchuk,**) who was enjoying great popularity in that town, and in face of the active resistance of the Bolsheviks. Measures of this kind were carried out in an organized manner by the revolutionary sailors and workers throughout the town. The Bolshevik fraction left the session of the Kronstadt Soviet as a protest against the socialization of dwellings.

In the field of revolutionary struggle directed towards immediate abolition of the institution of private property in the means of production, the influence of the Anarchists was even more pronounced. The idea of "workers control", carried out through the medium of Factory Committees, an idea advocated by the Anarcho-Syndicalists from the very beginning of the revolution, struck root among the city proletariat, taking such stronghold upon the minds of the workers as to force its acceptance, in a distorted form, of course, by the Socialist parties. The Social-Democrats, and the right Social-Revolutionists managed to distort this idea of workers' control into that of state control over the industry, with the participation

*) The first article, the only one at that time, appearing on that question in the revolutionary press was published in the organ of the Petrograd Union for Anarcho-Syndicalist Propaganda, "Golos Trouda", was written by the author of these lines. Later a small pamphlet written on that question by A. Atabekian was published in Moscow.

***) Yartchuk was deported and deprived of Russian citizenship in 1921. He lived in Paris in great want and finally petitioned the Soviet government about having the order for his deportation rescinded. In 1925 he became a Bolshevik, and with the aid of Bukharin he returned to Russia.

of workers, leaving however, the enterprise in the hands of the capitalists.

As to the Bolsheviks, they were quite vague as to the meaning of the term "workers' control," leaving it undefined, and making it into a handy tool of demagogic propaganda.*) They refused to accept the Anarcho-Syndicalist construction of the idea of "workers' control", namely: taking control of production, its socialization and instituting a workers' control over the socialized production through the medium of Factory Committees. This Anarcho-Syndicalist idea won out, the workers having begun the practice of sequestering enterprises while the Bourgeois-Socialist government was still in power. The Factory Committees and various control committees were already taking over the managing functions at that time. On the eve of the October revolution this movement assumed a veritable mass character.

The Factory Committees and their Central Bureau became the foundation of the new revolutionary movement which set itself the task of making the factories into *Productive and Consumptive Communes*. The Factory Committees were to become the nuclei of the new social order which was gradually emerging from the inchoate elemental life of the revolution. Anarchistic in their essence, the Factory Committees made many enemies for themselves. The attitude of all the parties was that of restrained hostility, their efforts centering upon reducing the Factory Committees to a subordinate position within the trade unions. The Communists from the first manifested suspicions in regard to this type of organization. It was only after they had become convinced that the trade unions were too strongly dominated by the Social-Democrats to lend themselves as instrumentalities of the Communist policy that, following the Anarcho-Syndicalists, they began to center their attention upon

*) This statement is confirmed by A. Lozovsky (S. A. Dridzo), who writes the following in his pamphlet "Workers' Control." (Petersburg, the Socialist Publishing House, 1918).

"Workers' control was the fighting slogan of the Bolsheviks prior to the October days. . . . but notwithstanding the fact that workers' control figured in all resolutions, and was displayed on all banners, it had an aura of mystery about it. The Party press wrote little about this slogan, and even less did it try to implement it with a concrete content. When the October revolution broke out and it became necessary to say clearly and precisely what this workers' control was, it developed that, even among the partisans of this slogan, there existed great differences of opinion on that score." (p. 19).

the Factory Committees, aiming to place them under their control, and through those committees ultimately to obtain control of the trade unions. This attitude notwithstanding, the Bolsheviks were forced by the course of events to assume a position toward the Factory Committees which differed but little from that of the Anarcho-Syndicalists. It was only gradually that they assumed such a position. At first they combatted this attitude.*) It is characteristic that it was only the Anarcho-Syndicalist press that rightly evaluated the role and significance of the Factory Committees. The first article appearing in the revolutionary press on this problem belongs to the author of these lines who wrote in the first issue of "Golos Trouda". (Incidentally, the article did not express the opinion of the "Golos Trouda" as a whole on this problem). At one of the conferences of the Factory Committees held in Petrograd, in the month of August, 1917, this article was hotly contested by the Bolsheviks, notably by Lozovsky and others. But this idea, sound in itself and answering the moods and the needs of the workers, became dominant even in the Bolshevik party. Its inner plausibility was such that even Lenin declared in his speech delivered at the All-Russian Trade Union Convention (held in the spring of 1918) that "*the factory is a self-governing commune of producers and consumers.*"

The results of the Anarcho-Syndicalist propaganda in this plane, soon bore fruit. There followed a wave of seizures of enterprises and the organization of *Workers' Management*. Those seizures began when the provisional government was still in power, and, it stands to reason, the Anarchists played the first role in those seiz-

*) "The Anarcho-Syndicalists entrenched themselves behind the Factory Committees. They created a veritable theory around it, saying in effect that the trade unions have died, that the future belongs to the Factory Committees, who will deliver the knockout blow to capitalism, that the Factory Committees are the highest form of labor movement, etc. In a word, they developed in regard to the Factory Committees the same theory which the French Anarcho-Syndicalists developed in regard to the trade unions. Under these conditions the divorce between the two organizations (trade-unions and Factory Committees) represents the greatest danger for the labor movement of Russia.

"This danger is the greater, that even among the active people of the Factory Committees who are not Anarcho-Syndicalists, we also see this tendency to oppose the trade unions to the Factory Committees and even to replace industrial unions and their local branches with respective organizations of the factory committee type." (Lozovsky, "Workers Control", page 37).

ures. The most talked of event of that kind taking place at that period was the sequestration, effected under the direct influence of the Anarchist, Zhuk, of the Shlisselburg gunpowder mills and the agricultural estates, both of which were organized on the basis of Anarchist principles. Such events reoccurred more and more frequently, and on the eve of the October revolution, they came to be regarded as a matter of course.

Soon after the triumph of the October revolution, the Central Bureau of the Factory Committees worked out extensive instructions for the control of production. These instructions proved to be a brilliant literary document, showing the triumph of the Anarcho-Syndicalist idea. The significance of this incident is the greater when we take into consideration the fact that the Bolsheviks were predominant in the Factory Committees.*) This makes even more remarkable the successes achieved by our comrades, especially that of W. Shatov **) who subsequently left the Anarcho-Syndicalist movement, in their work carried on within the Factory Committees. Even though dominated by the Bolsheviks, the Factory Committees of that period were carrying out the Anarchist idea. The latter, of course, suffered in clarity and purity when carried out by the Bolsheviks within the Factory Committees; had the Anarchists been in the majority, they would have endeavored altogether to displace from the work of the committees the element of centralization and state principles.

*) How greatly the workers were influenced by the idea of Factory Committees being the executive bodies of *Factory-Communes* — the cellular bodies nucleating into a federative organization, which unites all workers and creates the necessary industrial administrative system — is evidenced by the uneasiness revealed by the Bolsheviks after the October revolution.

“In place of a ‘Republic of Soviets’, we are led to a republic of producers’ co-operatives (artels), into which the capitalist factories would be metamorphosed by this process. Instead of a rapid regulation of the social production and consumption — instead of measures which, objected to as they may be on various grounds, to represent a genuine step toward a socialist organization of society — instead of that we are witnessing something which partakes somewhat of the Anarchist visionary dreams about autonomous industrial communes.” (I. Stepanov, “From Workers Control Toward Workers Administration in the Industries and Agriculture,” page 11, Moscow, 1918).

**) Shatov became in fact a Bolshevik from the very moment when the capital was transferred to Moscow. During the most recent “bloody purge”, Shatov was arrested, and there is valid reason to believe that he had been “shot off”, that is, executed without the benefit of a trial.

Now let us take the problem of the defense of the revolution. It is sufficient to cite two or three instances in order to form an adequate idea of the role of the Anarchists in this field.

No sooner was the famous formula proclaimed: "war is ended, —peace has not been signed", and no sooner did the German-Austrian troops open their offensive, than guerrilla detachments sprung up everywhere, and in this work the Anarchists played a conspicuous role. Numerous Anarchist detachments sprang up and many of them distinguished themselves by their valor and steadfastness in the battles.*) How sweeping this movement was, one can judge from the fact that almost the entire staff of the "Golos Trouda" took up rifles, ready to leave for the front. That was the starting point of the notorious "Makhnovism" which only much later was compelled to alternate its blows at the White Guardists with armed defense against the Bolsheviks. In Kronstadt, comrade Yartchuk succeeded in organizing a detachment of sailors, from five to ten thousand strong, which smashed Kaledin's forces and succeeded in capturing Novocherkask. Prominent in those detachments were Anatoly Zheliezniakov who dissolved, upon his own initiative, the Constituent Assembly, Maxim Cherniak, Mokroyusov, Neousipov, Zhebenev, Karandashvilli and many others, especially in Siberia.

In political life the Anarchists played as prominent a role. It was only the Anarchists that waged an intensive campaign against the Constituent Assembly. The Bolsheviks began their cautious and feeble campaign against the Constituent Assembly only a few days prior to its first session. The Anarchists prepared the proletariat in a sufficient measure for the act of dissolution, and it was the Anarchists, acting through Anatoly Zheliezniakov, who was later outlawed by the Bolshevik authorities and finally killed by the cannon shell of a White Gaurdist, that carried out this act of dissolution.

The facts outlined above were rich in results. Following the October revolution, the position of the Anarchists became consolidated, their extent and sphere of activity grew largely. For the time being there reigned full and unlimited freedom. Conditions for carrying on work were most favorable, and Anarchist work reached its

*) Those detachments were one of the principal reasons for the routing of the Anarchists in 1918. The Bolsheviks feared that those armed forces may unite and become a tremendous military factor independent of the state, that is the Bolshevik party.

climax. The great masses of people were rapidly assimilating Anarcho-Syndicalist slogans of economic as well as political nature. Thus, for instance, the slogan of "the Third Revolution" and "Free Soviets," brought forth by the Anarcho-Syndicalists in the newspaper "Volny Golos Trouda" *) rapidly gained the sympathy of the working people. They actually became the general demand of the revolutionary masses, as witnessed by the Kronstadt rebellion.

However, the honeymoon was but of short duration. On April 12, 1918, the Bolshevik cannons trained upon the houses occupied by the Moscow Anarchists put an end to the Anarchist-Bolshevik "idyl and friendship". The Bolshevik cannonade signalized a new course in the relationships, and finally carried out the old threat made by the German Social-Democrats who said: "When we obtain power, our first duty will be to shoot the Anarchists". The Moor has done his work, the Moor can go!

We already dwelt upon the role and significance of the Anarchists in the revolution, in the period of the provisional government, as well as during the October revolution and the period following it. We pointed out this process of gradual growth and consolidation of Anarchist forces. This process greatly alarmed the Bolsheviks, and it was this feeling of uneasiness that prompted the foul act, unheard of in the history of revolutions: the secretly prepared pogroms of Anarchist organizations carried out on the night of April 12, 1918.

Beginning with that moment, the position of the Anarchists in Soviet Russia grew steadily worse. Slowly, cautiously, working with, and sometimes without, plan, meanly, barbarously; using armed repressions and prisons as their main weapon, the Bolsheviks

*) The left wing of the "Golos Trouda" group, which split off from the latter in August, 1918, and began publishing a weekly of its own named, "Volny Golos Trouda". The weekly was edited by G. Maximoff, who put forth the slogan of "Third Revolution", advocating the idea of "Free Soviets". The weekly was closed by the Bolsheviks following its fourth issue, the alleged reason of the authorities, being that its publication evinced "a provocative, counter-revolutionary, anti-soviet tendency". The publication was suspended and forbidden "to come out under a different name until the full triumph of Socialism has been attained." The group, "Volny Golos Trouda", carried out the first and second All-Russian Conference of Anarcho-Syndicalists, and later on it tried to unite the Anarcho-Syndicalists into a Confederation.

See the evaluation of the Kronstadt rebellion made by Lenin at the Tenth Party convention.

opened their battle against the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists, finally bringing it up to the level of an open, fierce and brazen persecution, which placed the Anarchists in a much worse position than in any Bourgeois-Democratic country. From that moment on the dry and wet guillotine began its work and it still keeps tirelessly at its bloody job.

The following circumstance is quite noteworthy. The entire campaign against the Anarchists was not, and still is not casual in its character. It does not proceed from one particular occasion to the other. No, just the opposite! It has the earmarks of a rigorously thought-out, subtle and premeditated plan—a plan firmly put into operation and gradually proceeding toward rawest physical methods which make the old method of the Tzar's secret police pale by comparison. This is shown fully and clearly even by a cursory review of the development of the revolution and the interrelationships of the Anarchists and Bolsheviks.

In this struggle against the Anarchists, the Bolsheviks took a firm course which warranted their victory, without involving any losses on their part. Their hits struck home. What was the reason of their success?

From the above one can clearly see to what extent the interests and objectives of the Anarchists and Bolsheviks became intertwined during the revolution. The Bolsheviks drew the proper conclusions from this circumstance. They fully understood that the Anarchists had been placed by the objective course of the revolutionary process which combined their own destiny with that of the Bolsheviks. And the Bolsheviks also realized that organizationally the Anarchists were still weak, that the Anarchist ideas, notwithstanding their considerable growth among the proletarian masses, were not yet firmly assimilated by the latter. It was those considerations that determined the course and tactics of the Bolsheviks' struggle against the Anarchists. The Bolsheviks clearly understood that, under the prevailing circumstances, it was impossible openly to persecute the Anarchists, without undermining their own standing with the revolutionary masses, who were greatly permeated with Anarchist, especially Anarcho-Syndicalist ideas, and who deemed the Anarchists the bearers of a true revolutionary idea. That is why the Bolsheviks chose the longer, but more assured course — the circuitous road of struggle, buttressed up with a vilifying campaign of calumny in the Communist press.

The first period of struggle against the Anarchists was characterized by the Bolsheviks as a struggle against "banditry" within Anarchist ranks. During that time the Bolsheviks declared that the Soviet power does not wage any struggle against the "ideological" Anarchists. The second period was characterized by a persecution drive against the "ideological" Anarchists, but not against all of them. Only the "active" Anarchists were to be persecuted. This period was marked by the suppression of the oppositionary Anarchist work, arrests and prison confinements of those who showed any activity in carrying on Anarchist propaganda and organizing the Anarchist ranks. The dominating slogan of that period is the struggle against "the petty-bourgeois Anarchist element forces".

In the third period we see already the struggle against the so-called "loyal" Anarchists, the "passive" Anarchists who were living on Soviet subsidies, that is, the full annihilation of the movement, going as far as burning Anarchist literature, placing people on trial for merely belonging to Anarchist groups, exile and imprisonment.

The fourth period is the period of the dry guillotine a period that continues into our own times,

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The first period of the persecutions was ushered in by the Moscow "pogroms." This question was seemingly decided upon in the Central Committee of the Communist Party, as well as the "Sovnarkom" (Council of People's Commissars). The party and government press were instructed to prepare the minds of the population for the coming event. Apart from that, it was also necessary adequately to prepare the Red Army units which at the critical moment might refuse to participate in this "operation". The prevailing mood of these units gave little assurance of unconditional loyalty and unquestioning obedience to the higher command.

It was then, only two weeks prior to the raid upon the Anarchists, that Trotzky came out with a series of "lectures" delivered before the Kremlin garrison. The gist of those "lectures" was that, in Moscow, private houses were seized not by Anarchists, but by bandits, and that the "Black Guards", organized by the Anarchists, consisted of bandits and cut-throats. Trotzky stated that all Anarchists are in fact bandits, who, in the interest of the maintainance of order and security should be dealt with all rigor, and, finally, that

it was necessary to purge the Anarchist groups from the "bandits" and White Guardists who had attached themselves to the Anarchist movement, having obtained such a grip upon the latter that the movement was powerless to get rid of them with its own forces.

The press began circulating rumors to the effect that the Anarchists were preparing themselves to seize power, and that the authorities had full proof to that effect.

This lying agitation continued for quite awhile, notwithstanding the denials and protests of the Anarchist press ("Golos Trouda" and "Anarchia"), which pointed to the absurd nature of this charge, maintaining that the source of this foul calumny was to be found within the Kremlin walls. The Anarchist press also pointed out that the Bolsheviks purposely deceived the population in order to subject the Anarchists to "a surgical operation". And that is exactly what happened.

The drama was enacted on the night of April 12, 1918. *) It took place at night, for the Bolsheviks were not altogether sure that their attack upon Anarchists, if attempted in the daytime, would not bring forth protests on the part of the workers, leading even to overt action on the part of the latter. The Red Army detachments, mostly Letts, armed with machine guns and cannons, closed in upon the 25 houses held by the Anarchists. The clubs were surrounded, and the Bolsheviks demanded the surrender of all those who were present there. Roused from their sleep, the Anarchists were led to believe that this sudden attack was engineered by *White-Guardists*. In many places they showed a stubborn resistance. Such resistance was especially strong in three places: in the Tzettlin house, on Povarskaya st.; at the Kupechesky Club, on Malaya Dmitrovka (Headquarters of the Central Bureau of the Anarchist Federation), and at the Donskoy Monastery, where the resistance was the strongest. Toward morning the operation was brought to a successful end, and the triumphant warriors, leading a throng of prisoners, most of whom consisted of passers-by, returned to the Kremlin.

In the morning the newspapers "Anarchia", the organ of the Federation of Moscow Anarchist groups, failed to come out. The same happened with "Golos Trouda" on the following day. Within a week not a single Anarchist publication was left in the city.

*) We present here in this book, the official statements made by the Bolsheviks and Left Social-Revolutionist government; and also quotations from their press.

At the Kremlin, the prisoners were subject to a most revolting procedure. They were confined under foul conditions, in cramped and unspeakably dirty quarters and were treated most barbarously. They were slugged and reviled. Ranged in military formations, they were made to undress, facing the indignities and mockeries heaped upon their naked bodies. The prisoners were placed in the position of animals in a menagerie: the well-to-do people of the city were invited to gloat at them behind the bars and to identify the "thugs" and the "bandits". Death hung over the heads of the prisoners. One of the victims of this unrestrained terror proved to be one of the best Moscow workers, the Anarchist Khodounov. He was killed while allegedly making an attempt to escape.*)

From Moscow, its point of origin, this "pogrom" wave swept throughout Russia. Anarchists were arrested, their press, strangled.

The anarchist movement could not recover after those hard blows. But the masses were still sympathetic to the anarchist idea, even to the extent of forcing the Bolsheviks to permit the issuing of the paper "Anarchia". Alas, that did not last long! The paper was suspended and soon stopped from reappearing.

Anarchist meetings and lectures were still tolerated. But things had already changed. The Bolshevik regime was getting stronger, and, proportionately Bolshevik persecutions grew in scope and intensity, although here and there anarchist publications managed to hold out. The fall of 1918 saw the appearance of the anarcho-syndicalist paper "Volny Golos Trouda". However, the publication was short-lived, having been suspended at its fourth issue. In Petrograd its circulation was forbidden at its second issue by the special order of Zinoviev. It was finally suspended on the grounds of manifesting an "anti-Soviet tendency". The suspension was final, or "until socialism triumphs in Russia," as one of the official Communists declared to the writer of these lines.

"Volny Golos Trouda" was the only and last Anarchist paper which came out in Russia toward the end of 1918. Following its suspension, there was not left a single publication of anarchist thought. This condition lasted till the middle of the year of 1919 when the anarcho-communist weekly "Troud and Volia" began to come out. The paper was suspended at its sixth issue.

Concurrently with the suspension of "Volny Golos Trouda",

*) See the Khodounov obituary on page 388.

a few Anarchists, some of whom were closely connected with the publishing of the suspended paper, began to publish in Kursk a paper by the name of "Nabat". The paper was designated for Ukraine which at that time was occupied by the German-Austrian troops. "Nabat" was smuggled across the border and circulated among the peasants and workers.

The successful peasant uprising led by the Anarchist Nestor Machno, the clearing of Ukraine of foreign troops and Petliura bands, enabled the Confederation of Anarchist Organizations of Ukraine ("Nabat"), taking shape at that time, to transfer their work to the center of Ukraine, and to start an extensive spoken and written propaganda throughout the country. Anarchist publications, mostly under the name of "Nabat", began to appear in various towns of Ukraine, such as Kharkov, Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, Gouliay-Polie, Elisavetgrad and Alexandrovsk. Freedom, however, was quite short-lived. Within two months all this work of propaganda had been entirely liquidated. By July, 1919, not a single Anarchist publication was left in Ukraine.

By that time the publication "Troud and Volia", appearing in Moscow, was also closed, and thus throughout the length and breadth of the Soviet country—from Siberia to the Western borders and from the Black sea to the White sea—not a single anarchist paper or publication was allowed to appear. That condition lasted until the end of 1920, with the exception of one single issue of "Golos Trouda" and a small "loyal" magazine, published by the "domesticated" Anarchists, the so-called All-Russian Federation of Anarcho-Communists, the name of which was "Volnaya Zhizn". This sheet appeared under the editorship of A. Karelin. Even such petty, insignificant Anarchist activity, which was very far from shaking the foundations of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat", the kind of work which is freely permitted in any bourgeois democratic country, even that became absolutely impossible.

And thus was created an atmosphere of malice, despair, and vindictiveness, which proved to be too strong for some honest, but rather myopic and impulsive, Anarchists. These having drifted away from their respective groups, and having lost firm ground from under their feet, became strongly influenced by the underground activity of the Left Social-Revolutionists, especially by the personality of the courageous Cherepanov, who swayed many of them into terroristic activity against the Communists.

Along with the repressions against the press also went repressions against organizations and persons. The most outstanding event of the end of the year 1918 in this respect, is the arrest of the delegates of the Second All-Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Conference.

At the end of the year 1919 a bomb of terrific explosive power was hurled at the Moscow Committee of the Bolshevik Party. This useless act, misunderstood by the masses of the people, brought forth the protests of all Anarchists of Moscow, regardless of the degree to which they condemned the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat". Protests against this terroristic act were also voiced by the delegate of the Ukrainian Anarchist Confederation "Nabat", A. Baron, who was present at that time in Moscow. The sharp condemnation of this terroristic act by the Anarchists was embodied in resolution published in the official publication, the only one in existence at that time. This protest had a restraining influence upon many Anarchists, keeping them from adopting the tactics, harmful for that period, of terroristic struggles against the Communists.

The terrorists were caught, that is, with the exception of Kovalovich,*) and Sobolev, who died a heroic death rather than submit to arrest, and six others who blew themselves up at the Kraskov villa. Most of those who were caught bore themselves in a rather unheroic fashion and were shot. Some of them (like the brothers Tiamin) became stool-pigeons and chekists — agent of the Che-Ka.

This terroristic act resulted in wholesale arrests throughout Russia. The most sweeping arrests took place in Moscow. The Moscow Anarchists and Left Social-Revolutionists were taken as hostages. The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had under discussion the question of wholesale shooting of those hostages, which, it was reported at that time, was rejected by the majority of one vote only, the vote of Kamenev.**) This was followed by further arrests, although not on such a sweeping scale as the one following the terroristic act. Such was the situation which lasted until the autumn of 1920.

*) Kasimir Kovalevich, an active and influential worker in the Railway-men's union, enjoyed great popularity on the lines of the Moscow junction.

***) Only a year later, while the author of these lines was in another prison, he learned that he together with other Moscow Anarchists, who had been arrested following the explosion at the Leontievsky alley, were being held as hostages. That information was imparted by one of the influential Socialists whose name cannot be revealed here.

Now Trotzky could tell us whether it is true or not . . .

Beginning with the month of November, 1920, another wave of mass arrests, revolting in their character, began to sweep the country. Thus, at the end of November, the premises of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation, where lectures were given with the permission of the authorities, were raided by the Che-Ka agents who arrested all those who were in those quarters. Quite in keeping with the moral level of the Bolshevik secret police, Che-Ka agents tried to search the women with their own hands!

The arrests having been completed, the che-kists went into ambush to wait for the secretary of the Executive Committee of the Confederation, the author of these lines. The arrest of the Secretary, and a few others caught in the net of this ambush, followed. Prior to the arrest of the Secretary, the Che-Ka agents made a thorough search in his apartment, taking with them seals, correspondence and the material belonging to the organization. This completed the operation.

Soon a number of the arrested Anarchists were set free, while the others remained in confinement with no charges presented against them. The prisoners declared a hunger strike in protest. Some of them, like Goldenberg, remained on strike for 13 days. It was of no avail, however; the Communists did not pay any attention to this hunger strike.

The second important event in this field was the wave of arrests in Kharkov.

According to the pact concluded between the Soviet government and Makhno, the Anarchists were to be granted the full right to carry on their written and oral propaganda.*) Basing themselves upon the provisions of this pact specifying such rights, the Anarchists began to publish in Kharkov a paper entitled "Nabat", and also designated the first of December as the date of the coming Anarchist convention. In other words, they set out to conduct their propaganda along lines which were quite within the legal framework of any bourgeois democracy. What happened, however, showed how lamentably low the Soviet government had fallen, even from the standards of a bourgeois democracy.

No sooner did the Soviet troops, assisted by Makhno, smash the last resistance of Wrangel in Krimea, than Makhno himself was declared "beyond the pale of the law," and the charge was hurled

*) The pact is cited in this book on pp. 124-126.

against the Anarchists of Ukraine, of organizing a plot against the Soviet power. On the night of November 25 all the Anarchists of Khar-kov, including the delegates arriving for the proposed convention, were arrested. The newspaper ("Nabat") was closed up and the organization smashed. The book store was wrecked, the books were mostly destroyed, the remainder being taken away to the Che-Ka. The arrested Anarchists were conveyed to Moscow prisons where some of them were freed. The rest are still languishing in various prisons and places of exile.

The events in Kronstadt, the unrest among the peasants, the growing loss of the Party's standing among the workers — all that led, as it is always the case with despotic regimes, to repressions. And thus on the night of March 8, 1921, the Bolsheviki made numerous arrests of Anarchists throughout Soviet Russia. In Moscow alone, proceeding in accordance to a list of names especially prepared for the occasion, the Chekists arrested more than twenty Anarchists. Orders for similar arrests were issued throughout Russia.

Anarchists arrested in the provinces were released only upon condition of signing a written declaration disavowing any intention of going to the Convention of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation, which was to take place on April 25. That is what took place in Roslavl, of the Smolensk province, in Minsk, in Romny, of the Poltava Province, and in many other places.

The cycle of persecutions was brought to an end with the carrying off of the Anarchists and Socialists from the Butirky prison at Moscow, to the prisons of other cities. This forcible carrying off was attended by almost incredible atrocities. Prisoners were slugged with rifle butts, half dressed women were dragged out by their hair. The details of these events are related in the appeal "*To the International Proletariat and the Anarchist Organizations of the World*",*) and we shall not dwell upon them any longer.

Such were the circumstances of the Anarchists and the Anarchist work in the "Socialist, Federated, Soviet Republic".

A few remarks may aid in making this picture even clearer. The author of these lines, like many others sharing his convictions, was arrested six times during two-and-a-half years. In addition he was

*) The sluggings taking place in Butirky were described in the "Letters from Russian prisons", pages 134-139. (The book was published by "The International Committee for Political Prisoners", New York, 1925).

subjected to numerous searches. Such were also the conditions in which Socialists and other non-Communists were placed.

The above said is not meant, even by way of influence, to serve as a moral lesson to the proletariat of America and Western Europe. We are only confining ourselves to the presentation of bare facts — facts that will enable anyone to make his own evaluation of the regime of the so-called “Dictatorship of the Proletariat” and to arrive at conclusions of his own. We want everyone to start thinking about the essential nature of State Communism and State Socialism, by asking themselves the question: *Do not all those above related facts which form only a tiniest part of the horror taking place in Russia, flow from the basic principles of authoritarian State-Communism and Socialism?*

**

The above pages were written in the Taganka prison (Moscow) on May 13, 1921. And while we sat in prison, the Bolsheviks proceeded to the next step of annihilating the so-called “loyal Anarchists”, those that had worked hand-in-hand with them.

The first victims of this new wave of Bolshevik terror were the “Universalists”. The Bolsheviks did not patronize them for long. On the night of November 3, 1921, the organization was smashed. The magazine “Universal” was closed up, many members of the organization were taken to prison and others were sentenced to the concentration camp of Archangelsk.*) The place of the “Universalist” was soon taken by the “Anarcho-Biocosmists”, who came out for the full support of the Soviet power for reasons of personal safety. Their aim was to bring about the social revolution in the interplanetary spaces but not upon the Soviet territory.

Apart from those abortive misfits, spawned by that period of decay, there also thrived for some time the so-called “Inter-Individualists”. Likewise, an innocuous little sheet published by the All-Russian Federation of Anarcho-Communists, “Volnaya Zhizn”, was permitted to come out for some time.

Those were the organizations existing at that time in Soviet Rus-

*) We are citing here in this book a document bearing on this case. The detail description of “Universalists” hunger strike the reader will find in the book “Letters from Russian Prisons”, pages 162-163, 171-177.

sia. I am not including the Anarcho-Syndicalist group "Golos Trouda", which at that time confined itself to mere book publishing, although its members were, as occasion demanded, doing their regular prison duties, even though the publishing house would be shut up from time to time. In 1922 the Bolsheviks deported A. Shapiro, the secretary of the "Golos Trouda" group.

There now reigns in Russia a pitch dark Communist Reaction. The Anarchist movement is smashed; Anarchists are shot, imprisoned, exiled to the far northern provinces, or are deported from the "Socialist Fatherland".

At the present time not a single Anarchist organization is left in Russia. The "originators" of "Inter-Individualism" all their sail-trimming and time serving notwithstanding, were forced to flee the land. The magazine of the All-Russian Federation of Anarchist-Communists, "Volnaya Zhizn", is closed, the member of the Federation have been imprisoned and exiled. The publishing house "Golos Trouda" has been closed up by the Bolshevik authorities and its active members are now serving time in the far away places of exile. Eminent persons, like the erstwhile assistant professor of the Moscow University, A. A. Borovoy, known for his Anarchist world outlook, was also exiled into the remote provinces of the country where he died some years ago.

The persecution of Anarchists is now being wound up by a thorough wrecking of their organizations. The Anarchists are the last to leave the stage of the revolution. And now that the field has been cleared of Anarchists, and no more recalcitrants left to be shot and persecuted, the Communists betook themselves to their own ranks, carrying over the same methods of G. P. U. — "persuasion" to the members of their own party!

Russia under Communism is a mute, speechless country, a country that has been gagged and muzzled. Gagging and muzzling — this is what characterizes the regime that dominates the situation in present-day Russia. It is a country where the dry and wet guillotine keeps on ceaselessly working!

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Our survey will not be complete without a few supplementary notes dwelling upon the role of the Anarchists in the labor movement of Russia during the revolution.

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We are not out here to furnish a detailed history of the Russian trade-union movement, or a chronicle of the struggle of various political parties and groups within the trade-unions. Ours is a purely informatory task. We desire to stress those moments in the life of the trade-union movement highlighted by the work of the Anarcho-Syndicalist minority and to report further on a recent movement of that within the Russian trade-unions.

The labor movement, like the revolution itself, sprang forth in a spontaneous fashion. It set aside trade unions, basing itself mainly upon the Factory Committees and their associations, especially in Petrograd.

Although the Russian proletariat was, as a whole, entirely ignorant of the ideas of Revolutionary Syndicalism, and notwithstanding the scarcity of Anarcho-Syndicalist literature, as well as an almost total lack of the representatives of this movement among the Russian workers; notwithstanding all that, the labor movement of Russia went along the road of decentralization. It chose spontaneously the course of a unique Revolutionary Syndicalism. Unlike other periods, the one following the February revolution of 1917 was characterized by the active participation of Anarcho-Syndicalists—workers who had returned to Russia from the United States where they took part in the struggles of the Industrial Workers of the World, (I. W. W.).

Until January 1918, that is, until the First All-Russian Trade Union Convention, the labor movement sailed under the banners of the Factory Committees. These waged a fierce struggle against the bourgeois elements that fought silently for supremacy as against the trade unions. This struggle assumed an especially strong character after the Third All-Russian Trade Union Conference, which clearly revealed the gulf between the tactics and aims of the trade unions and those of the Factory Committees. The later, united at first in Petrograd and then throughout Russia, singled out their own central bodies and gave the keystone to the course of the revolution. The Anarcho-Syndicalists took an active part in both the Factory Committees and trade unions. There was no unanimity in the Anarcho-Syndicalist ranks as to which of the two organizations should be preferred. The movement headed by the author of these lines was far from being shared by the rest of the Anarchists. It was not even accepted by the group publishing the "Golos Trouda". Likewise, many Bolsheviks were averse to the viewpoint favoring the Factory Committee as against the trade unions. At one of the conferences of the

Petrograd Factory Committees Lozovsky subjected this view, and the movement backing it, to a cruel and unscrupulous attack.

On the whole, however, the Anarcho-Syndicalist elements showed a preference for the Factory Committees, having concentrated their forces in that direction. These elements were represented in many individual Factory Committees as well as in the Petrograd Bureau and in the All-Russian Central Bureau of Factory Committees. Likewise the influence exercised by the Anarcho-Syndicalists upon the work of the conferences of the Factory Committees, "Novy Put" was strongly colored with a unique kind of Anarcho-Syndicalism, although no Anarcho-Syndicalists worked on the staff of the publication.

In view of this direct and indirect influence of Anarcho-Syndicalists, the bourgeois and socialist papers began to strike alarm: the newspapers, "Dien", (bourgeois), "Novaya Zhizn", (socialist), "Izvestia Petrogradskogo Obshtchestva Zavodchikov y Fabricantov", (bourgeois), "Izvestia Tzentralnogo Ispolnitelnogo Komiteta", (socialist), "Rabochaya Gazeta", (socialist) etc. The Social-Democrats issued a special publication, ("Rabochaya Mysl") for the purpose of combatting the Anarcho-Syndicalist influence among the organized proletariat.

It was in vain, however. The Anarcho-Syndicalists were conquering the masses with the slogan of "Workers control". Even greater masses of workers were swept into the sphere of Anarcho-Syndicalist influence which impelled the workers to proceed with the seizure of factories. The influence of the Anarcho-Syndicalist slogan "worker's control" showed itself in the "Manual for the Carrying Out of Workers' Control of Industry", which was made up and published by the Central Council of the Petrograd Factory Committees and which met a sharp rebuff on the part of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks at the First All-Russian Trade Union Convention. (See: "The First All-Russian Convention of Trade Unions". Stenographic Report. Also see: A. Lozovsky (Dridzo), "Workers' Control").

The Anarcho-Syndicalists at that time had their group organizations outside of the unions and were publishing newspapers and magazines. In Petrograd, "Golos Trouda", in Kharkov, "Rabochaya Mysl", in Krasnoyarsk, "Sibirsky Anarchist", in Moscow, a Revolutionary Syndicalist organ, "Rabochaya Zhizn" etc. The Anarcho-Syndicalists were represented in numerous Factory Committees and trade unions, where they were carrying on an intensive

propaganda of their ideas. The great majority of Anarcho-Syndicalists were of the opinion that by working within the trade union they would succeed in imparting to the latter an Anarcho-Syndicalist direction.

Prior to the first All-Russian Trade Union Convention the Anarcho-Syndicalists succeeded in organizing upon the platform of the American I. W. W. between 25 and 30 thousand miners of the Debaltzev district in the Don Basin. The Cossack massacre which led to the murder of comrade Koniayev, the organizer of this union, and the subsequent civil war destroyed those beginnings. The same was true of the Anarcho-Syndicalist work in the Cheremkhovo mine, prior to the Czecho-Slovak rebellion. In Ekaterinodar and throughout Novorossiysk province the labor movement was adopting the Anarcho-Syndicalist platform.*) In Moscow the Anarcho-Syndicalists had a leading influence among the railway workers, perfumery workers **) and others. To translate this influence into terms of definite numbers is rather difficult. We can only point out that, at the first All-Russian Trade Union Convention, there was an Anarcho-Syndicalist faction. It included a few Maximilists and other sympathizers totaling twenty five people. And since the basis of representation was on the average of one delegate per 3,000-3,500 members, one may say that the number of organized Anarcho-Syndicalist workers reached 88,000. This figure, however, might safely be increased two or three times in order to form an adequate idea of the actual sweep of the movement.

At the first Trade Union Convention which took place immediately after the October revolution, the Bolsheviki and Left Social-Revolutionists were in the majority. It signified the final victory of the trade unions over the Factory Committees. The Bolsheviki subordinated the Factory Committees, which were federalistic and anarchistic by their nature, to the centralized trade unions. With the help of the trade unions, the Bolsheviki succeeded in making the Factory Committees a tool of their policy of domination over the masses. Having succeeded in that, the Bolsheviki proceeded to strip

*) This movement was headed by B. Yelensky, Katia Gorbova and others. The movement embraced the entire Chernomorsky province, with the cities Ekaterinodar and Novorossiysk. The main contingents of workers in this movement were made up of longshoremen and cement workers.

**) The work was carried on by Preferansov, N. K. Lebediev, Kritskaya and others.

the Factory Committees of all their functions. And by this time, the Factory Committees fulfilled only one function, and that is the police role imposed upon them by the Bolsheviks.

In 1918, the Bolshevik Terror still spared the trade unions. And thus we see the development of an Anarcho-Syndicalist movement in the bakers' union of Moscow, Kharkov and Kiev,*) among the Petrograd Postal and Telegraph workers. At the All-Russian convention of Postal and Telegraph workers, the Anarcho-Syndicalists exercised quite a powerful influence, more than half of the delegates following their leadership.**) The Petrograd branch of this union marched under the banners of Anarcho-Syndicalism. Its publication, "Izvestia Pochtovo-Telegrafnikh Sluzhashtchikh Petrograda", was edited by Anarcho-Syndicalists. The same was true of the Union River Transport Workers of the Volga basin where, due to the work of comrade Anosov, the union publication took on a definite Anarcho-Syndicalist character.

All that, however, was destroyed by the Bolsheviks. The industrial principle underlying the process of merging unions into large units, became an apt weapon in the hands of the Bolsheviks in their struggle against Anarcho-Syndicalism. In the first place the Bolsheviks began to consolidate those unions which they deemed unreliable from the point of view of their basic drive for domination. The move was to merge those unions in the general mass, and to scatter the leading Anarcho-Syndicalist workers throughout those unions which were considered "reliable" from their point of view. Thus went down a number of Anarchist-minded trade unions: the union of Telegraph workers in Petrograd, of perfumery workers in Moscow, of Water Transport workers in Kazan, the organizations of some important railroad junctions of Moscow, Kursk, where comrades like Kovalevich and Dvumjantzev played an important role.

Due to this measure, due to intensified centralization coupled

*) Very energetic work was carried on among the Kiev bakers by A. Baron, who if not executed by now, is still being kept in prison or exile. Ever since 1920, he was being switched back and forth from various prisons to places of exile.

***) The principal Anarcho-Syndicalist workers in this union were Mikhalev, Bondarev and others. As to the extent of the influence exercised by the Anarcho-Syndicalist ideas within this union, one can form an adequate idea, by reading the stenographic report of the convention held in 1918.

with unscrupulous juggling of votes and in some places, the severe measures applied by the authorities, the administrative bodies fell into the hands of Communists. The Second All-Russian Convention of Trade Unions (1919) furnishes an apt illustration of this process of capturing the trade unions. At that convention the number of Anarcho-Syndicalists and their sympathizers delegated to that convention was only 15. That is, they represented only 52,950. At that moment, however, the workers' sympathies toward Anarcho-Syndicalism were noticeable on the increase, a fact which was accentuated by a concurrent lowering of the standing of the Bolsheviki in the eyes of the workers. The standing rules by which the convention was to abide deprived the Anarcho-Syndicalists of the right of having their own speaker on the important questions on the agenda. At the third convention, held in 1920, there were only 10 Anarcho-Syndicalist delegates, (including sympathizers) representing only 35,300 people.

Those conventions fully demonstrated the failure of the tactics advocated by "Golos Trouda" which opinions carried weight with the Anarcho-Syndicalists of Russia.*) The lack of purely revolutionary unions hastened the destruction of the Anarchist and Syndicalist movements. Scattered throughout the Bolshevik unions, the Anarcho-Syndicalist forces could not show any resistance and were flattened out by the iron policy of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat".

At the beginning of 1920 there was only one union in Moscow which held out for the Anarcho-Syndicalist line. This was the Bakers Union, whose Anarcho-Syndicalist orientation was due to the work of our comrade N. I. Pavlov, (the later, however, recanted his Anarcho-Syndicalist views under the pressure of the G. P. U., this being the price paid by him for his liberty).**) A contributing factor to the persistence of Anarcho-Syndicalist influence in the Bakers' Unions was the work of the Maximilists, Niushenkov and Kamyshev.

At the second All-Russian Convention, the Bakers union contained a "Federalist" faction numbering ten to fifteen people, whose following in the union extended to nearly a third of its membership. At that convention, the first attempt was made (Maximoff, Niushen-

*) The author was on the staff of "Golos Trouda", this, however, does not deter him from acknowledging the errors made by the paper.

***) Pavlov made this statement (disavowing his Anarchist views) upon his release from prison.

kov, Pavlov) to organize an underground revolutionary Federation of Food Workers. This was to be the first step toward the organization of a Russian General Confederation of Labor. The move was to have been a genuine attempt of the Executive Committee of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists to carry out the basic points of its program. In view of the repressions which began soon, the committee of the above mentioned comrades, elected at the meeting of the faction of the convention, did not even get a chance to start its work as planned at the meeting. This was the last vivid manifestation of the struggle waged by Anarcho-Syndicalism within the communist state-controlled trade union movement.

The program of the Russian trade union movement was as follows: centralization, compulsory membership, compulsory discipline imposed by disciplinary courts, the tutelage of the political party (The Communist party in this case), militarization of labor, compulsory labor service, labor armies, the attachment of workers to their places of work, nationalization of production, individual management (instead of collective administration), graduated wage scales (36 categories), introduction of sweat shop system, Taylorism, piece work, bonuses, premium systems, etc. Workers' control and workers' management were proscribed and unconditional support of the government was demanded.

The policy and program of the trade unions was wholly determined (and still is determined) by the policies and program of the "Communist Government". At present, and that has been true for a number of years, the unions, or rather their administrative centers, have nothing in common with the proletarian masses. They only mirror the policy of the government, fulfilling all its demands at the expense of the working class.

The Soviet State has kept up its terroristic methods in suppressing all opposition within unions, meting out brutal punishment to any one violating government decrees, which are inimical to the workers. In this respect the unions proved to be one of the numerous government repressive agencies, working in close collaboration with the other punitive organs of the state: the Che-Ka, People's Courts, the G. P. U. etc.

The following furnishes quite an apt illustration of this terroristic policy toward workers. The "Krasny Nabat" and "Uralsky Rabochy" reported the following cases: for taking an unauthorized three-day leave from his factory, one of the workers was sentenced

to unload 5,000 pouds, (1 poud is 36 pounds avoirdupois) during ten days. All that to be done after his regular workday. Many other workers were sentenced to compulsory prison work for the same "crime" of absenting themselves during work. This slave holding policy flourished, especially so in the Ural region, during the administration of Trotzky and Piatakov.

A government inspection of the sanitary and technical conditions prevailing in the Central Coal District revealed a ghastly picture which makes even the most frightful capitalist exploitation pale in comparison. In the name of the "commonwealth", that is, the benefit of the state, workers had to live miles away from the mines in ramshacle barracks built of thin boards, and lacking elementary conveniences, where even doors and windows have fallen into a state of disuse. In the winter the barracks furnished hardly any protection against frosts and icy winds. There were no toilets in these places, workers being compelled on that account to use cess-pools surrounding the barracks.

Mine workers were getting half a pound of bread a day, on condition, however, that they fulfilled their daily norm of work. Failing that, they were deprived of this ration. In addition to that, overtime was exacted from the workers, who were paid for it with one meal a day. Workers who did not fulfill their norm, were kept in the mine until they completed their daily task. And this leaves out the account of the flagrant tyranny and high-handed action characterizing the attitude of the administration toward the workers.*)

Such facts were especially prevalent in the life of the Ural workers during the administration of Trotzky and Piatakov. At the Izhevsk plant for instance, an anarchist worker by the name of Gordeyev, was shot for failing to submit to the work discipline (See "Golos Rossiyi" for the first half of 1922, Berlin). In Ekaterinburg (now Swerdlovsk) workers of the mint were sentenced to hard prison labor, their "crime" being "violation of labor discipline".

What was the Anarcho-Syndicalist program as opposed to that of the government-controlled "communist unions?"

The Anarcho-Syndicalist point of view was that the state—even the so-called benevolent state—is the enemy of the proletariat. It

*) This data taken from the unpublished report of the doctors who were carrying out this investigation. The report is kept among the materials of the Department of Safeguarding Labor, at the Labor Commissariat.

follows therefore that the first task of the trade unions should be to emancipate themselves from state captivity, to emphasise the significance of industrial organization. It was in accordance with this premise that the Anarcho-Syndicalists built their program and tactics in the Russian trade union movement. The ideological position of the Anarcho-Syndicalists was fully delineated in my thesis, "The tasks of the Industrial Union", presented in my paper which was read before the second All-Russian Convention of Food Workers.*) The Convention took place in Moscow March 17-25, 1920. Part of this thesis is reproduced here in the following chapter.

THE TASKS OF THE INDUSTRIAL UNIONS

1) One of the results of the October revolution is the actual and not only formal subjection of the industrial unions to the state. Being in fact nothing but state organizations, the industrial unions kept on, and still keep on discharging the functions of various state organs—and often police functions at that—carrying out the task set by the state power. Frequently this was far from coinciding with the interests of the proletariat. The industrial unions have become one with the state organism. Essentially, they have become an important component element of the state apparatus, giving support to party, group and personal dictatorship. They represent not an economic but a political dictatorship, a dictatorship exercised not so much over the bourgeois as over the proletariat, and especially over the peasantry. They are no longer institutions organizing the proletariat. They are no longer nuclei of the new stateless society of the future in which unions organized in large Industrial Federations will become the principle organizations. They no longer propose to take upon themselves the regulation of production and the gratification of the consumer's needs. Instead, such unions have turned into organs alien to proletarian interests.

2) Every state, whether bourgeois or socialist, is but a gendarme either guarding the capitalist order, under the domination of the bourgeois, or the state order under socialism. The state always stands on guard in the interests of the bosses. This is its function, the one reason for its existence.

*) This paper is included in the pamphlet, "Instead of a Program," published by the Foreign Bureau to Promote an All-Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation, Berlin, 1922. This thesis will enable the reader to get an adequate idea of the program of militantly active Russian Anarcho-Syndicalism.

The Soviet State differs from other states by combining both functions that of the gendarme and the boss. It begot a new class, the present ruling class which exercises the power of dictatorship. It is the class of organizers, leaders, administrators, in other words, the class exercising supreme power. Although it arose but recently from the proletarian ranks, this class has already acquired specific interests of its own which are inimical to those of the proletariat. The Socialist State cannot abolish classes. It does away with old classes, the bourgeois and proletariat, replacing them with new ones. Lords, and those who are lorded over; rulers and ruled; masters and slaves. The form changes, but the essence—slavery—remains the same. The state—even the benevolent state—is the enemy of the proletariat. And therefore the primary task of the industrial unions should be to emancipate themselves from the hold exercised by the state, and to stress the significance of the industrial organizations.

3) At the dawn of its youth (1789-1793) the bourgeois state gave the people political freedom, but it stifled the people's aspirations toward socialization, that is it prevented the people from conquering what might become the basis of actual and not formal freedom, thus rendering impossible real equality. Lacking this basis, freedom becomes a misnomer, for economic inequality is the source of starvation, poverty—of slavery. The Socialist or Communist State wages the struggle against the people in the reverse direction. It seemingly does not attempt to destroy the people's aspirations toward economic equality, toward socialization, but it stifles mercilessly any endeavor toward political freedom. A full stomach without freedom—that is the life of a slave. "Freedom is indivisible, it cannot be curtailed in a piecemeal way without having it destroyed as a whole."

Every state, whether bourgeois or socialist, curtails freedom. Full freedom is incompatible with the existence of the state, for the state by its essence is a slaveholding institution. That is why the ultimate aims of the bourgeois and socialist states imply equality in slavery. The bourgeois state rests upon economic slavery, and the socialist state upon political slavery. Thus industrial union, which are non-partisan by their nature, must stand on the platform of proletarian class interests, that is, on the platform of "the Dictatorship of the Labor"*)

*) "*The Dictatorship of The Labor*" is a very bad term; we do not like it ourselves and never used it any more. Under this term in that time we understood free Federation of the Factory-Communes and villages—communes based upon free labor and economic and political equality.

and emancipate themselves from the parties, which minister to the interests of the state.

4) By collaborating with the state, the unions deprived themselves of the most valuable right, the right to rebel. Having become state organs, the unions rendered themselves alien to the proletariat. At the present time the unions organize the proletariat only in the formal sense of the word. Actually, the proletariat is not organized. It is an atomized, amorphous mass, lacking organic unity and organizational forms. The proletariat is united in a mechanical fashion, by decrees from above, but not by an act of its own free will and consciousness. The unions form in reality a void in the social life, they are but centers of professional aristocracy and bureaucracy. All the deadly sins of the state have been bodily transferred into the unions. Centralization and bureaucracy, the deadening state principles, have warped the unions, and that is why the urgent tasks of the unions must be:

- a) To restore the right to resist.
- b) To regain the sympathies of the proletariat.
- c) To unite the proletariat organically by appealing to class consciousness, and not by compulsion.
- d) To adopt the federalist instead of the centralistic, essentially bureaucratic principles of organization.
- e) To effect a revolution within the organization, by transforming it into an industrial union based upon Factory Committees.

5) The more than two years' experience which the trade unions obtained under circumstances of close collaboration with the state and dictatorship of the party, coupled with the lessons shown by the line of development of the October revolution, revealed with striking clearness the errors of the organizational line of the unions pursued in accordance with the decisions of the First and Second All-Russian Trade Union Convention. The life of the unions in the epoch of the revolution and dictatorship brought forth a set of problems demanding a forthright solution on the basis of experience. The task of the convention, therefore, is to solve those problems.

6) The end of the civil war, the establishing of peaceful relationships with the bourgeois border states, and also with the powerful imperialist countries of the world, will entail the necessity of

maintaining commercial relations with them. This places before the unions an entirely new task differing from the ones arising before them under conditions of Soviet State Capitalism. Those tasks must be solved in a concrete manner by the convention.

7) Experience shows that the rallying of the workers must proceed along the industrial principle, resting upon the Federation of Factory Committees. It also shows that such industrial unions are the only bodies who are genuinely interested and competent in the field of organization and management of economy in promoting the progressive development of the economy of the Industrial Republic. This Republic is to be set up by the union, by abolishing the state and almost all the political institution — which are mostly superfluous and costly to society — leaving only those which are necessary for the time being under conditions dictated by the transition toward a stateless society.

8) One of the most necessary and important conditions for the realization of the task formulated in the preceding (No. 7) paragraph is to *expropriate the state* and most merely to solve the question of finding adequate forms for the *participation* of unions in the organization of production. The Unions are to take over the economic functions of the state following which the state is bound to vanish, clearing the way for the building up of a free workers' society, created upon the basis of free labor.

The principal conditions for the realization of those objectives are:

- a) A well-knit plan of industrial organization, a united will and a single fighting plan.
- b) A high tension of the proletarian will and consciousness directed at the realization of those aims.
- e) Also to bear clearly in mind the maxim that economic any labor courts which deprive the workers of their power to resist.
- d) Laying down the principle of self-reliance for workers.
- e) Also to bear clearly in mind the maxim that economic dependence upon the owner of the means of production, upon the state in this case, is the source of slavery and subjection.
- f) That the basic aim must be the economic emancipation of workers and that the political movement must be subordinated to this aim.

- g) That the Industrial Association must become the cell of the new social structure.
- h) That the Socialist government is incapable of effecting the social reorganization upon the foundations of freedom.
- i) That the workers themselves are to familiarize themselves with the business of economic reconstruction and to prepare in the course of struggle the necessary cadres of an active, enterprising minority.
- j) To recognize the necessity and unavailability of a general strike entailing the liquidation of the bourgeois as well as the Social-Democratic society.
- k) To raise the cultural and material level of the well-being of the proletarian masses.

9) Thus the basic task of the unions should be not to "coordinate" its work with the economic organs of the state with the view of participating in the management and regulation of industry, but themselves to become the *economic organs* on the basis of the principles of industrial decentralization and a single social, technico-scientific body consultative by its nature — *The Council of National Labor, Economy and Culture*, which comes out from such structure of organization as the free-toiling society:

- a) This council is the single and only organ of the country possessing consultative and statistical functions. It unites upon the basis of freedom, all the toilers united into industrial and other associations, which affiliate themselves with the Council freely, without losing independence. Its functions are to solve questions and problems of a general character in the realm of labor, economic policy, material and spiritual culture.
- b) The industrial unions and unions of professional workers are the leading and regulating economic organs of their respective industries. They are guided in their work by theoretic and practical suggestions of the Council. Their functions are, (1) to regulate industry, distribute raw materials and, (2) to work out the production norms for their respective industries.
- c) Industrial sections, which carry out the functions of

the industrial unions within the limit of their respective industrial branches.

- d) **Factory Committees:** the basic economic and free organs of the New Society. They fulfill economic functions within every enterprise and are the executive organs of the industrial, consumers', ex-territorial Anarchistic Factory Communes.

10) The basic principle of industrial regulation and management, from the Factory Committee to the Council, is the "collegiate" (collective boards) management, non-authoritative methods and the right of recalling the delegate at any time.

11) To recognize that the unions are vitally interested in the reconstruction of the economy, and also that this reconstruction, under the lack of technical equipment, and serious shortage of labor power, cannot be achieved by labor armies — by the application of military labor service. Also, to recognize that the economic collapse can be overcome only by the self-help of workers, by their free labor, by their direct participation in the organization and management of production. All this is possible of achievement only under political and economic conditions totally differing from the ones prevailing in Soviet Russia. Under an *Industrial Republic* alone would this be possible.

12) As to labor armies, the lessons furnished by the history of forced labor armies of the past, tell us that their industrial efficacy is necessarily low, and that the quality of their work is on par with their efficiency. On the whole they do not warrant the amount of energy and social expenditure involved in their function. Labor armies are definitely the worst form of waste of labor energy.

13) The same can be established in regard to labor service carried out under conditions of militarization, which is a social evil, and signifies regress and not social progress, leading to a new form of serfdom unexampled in its scope of application. For labor service imposed under conditions when there is in existence the state, the employing system, the wage system is nothing but serfdom or even slavery. The proletariat as a class, as an economic category disappears, giving place to serfs. Labor service can and should be carried out only under conditions of freedom, in which case it is no more a compulsory service but a natural state of society, quite in harmony with the laws of nature. Labor service under conditions

of political dictatorship is serfdom, under conditions of "economic dictatorship" it is free labor.

14) The trade unions must remember that, even under conditions of an industrial organization of society, labor efficiency cannot be raised if the proletariat is not adequately prepared for it. And since labor productivity stands in direct ratio to the material and cultural level of the proletariat, the trade unions must especially stress the latter conditions. In order to improve the economic position of the workers, the unions must aim to take over the distributive apparatus or, at least to implement it as far as possible, with a proletarian personnel, and to fight for a real minimum, living wage, for equal compensation of labor. In respect of raising the cultural level, it is also necessary to wage a struggle directed toward taking away from the state the educational functions, or, at least, to put the greatest number of workers into the educational organs of the state. At the same time the unions are to pay most serious attention to the liquidation of illiteracy, the organization of courses of general knowledge and special technical training in schools, theatres, exhibitions, lectures, meetings, etc.

15) The resumption of commercial relations with capitalist countries should be utilized for the reconstruction of our economy by importing the necessary tools and building materials as well as by drawing to our fields and factories, workers from Western Europe, revolutionary workers in preference — those who will be able to raise the skill of our own workers.

16) Concessions granted by the Soviet power to the capitalists are not an historic necessity. They are the result of the domestic policy on the government which deadens the initiative and creative spirit of the masses. There would be no place for such concessions in an Industrial Federation.

17) Concessions are by no means a progressive factor. It is, on the contrary, one of the varieties of capitalist exploitation, predatory exploitation at that. If we assume that concessions do represent a progressive factor, we by the same token imply that the October revolution was an historic error, and that we have to go back to capitalism.

18) However, concessions are a fact which cannot be passed by. The trade unions must bear that in mind and prepare to wage a struggle with the old enemy.

19) The industrial unions must eradicate within themselves the

spirit of exploitation. They must discard the policy of repressions toward workers, cast overboard, as an old bourgeois rubbish, the principle that the "compensation of labor is to be in direct ratio to the results of labor" and replace it with the communistic principle, "to everyone according to his needs, from every one according to his ability." The unions should give up their activity in the direction of working out sharp graduation in the wage scale: equal wages will render superfluous this harmful form of activity.

20) Workers' Unions organized along industrial lines should include non-workers in their organizations: engineers, teachers, doctors, surveyors, agricultural scientists, etc. — each of them, with the exception of the Administration, charged with the task of hiring and firing.

21) The opening of the frontiers will place before the unions the task of resuming relations with comrades abroad and also of creating Federated Workers International, the true successor to the "International Workingmen's Association" (the First International).

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This brief essay is presented here with the hope that it will contribute toward a better understanding of the materials submitted in this book.

II

The Persecution of Anarchists in the Years of the Civil War

1918.

THE PRELUDE

ANARCHISM IS FAR FROM WORKING CLASS . . .

In a number of Moscow and Petrograd papers there appeared the information that the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, at its session of February 15, having heard the report of its member, Zalutzky, about the Anarchists, passed a resolution qualifying the Anarchist movement as a counter-revolutionary one. The Soviet resolved to conduct an energetic struggle against Anarchists and also to undertake resolute measures against the paper "Burevestnik" ("Storm Petrel").

"Anarchism, even when based upon and guided by ideas, is far from the working class" — reports Zalutzky in his talk on the struggle against Anarchism. "We must tell those gentlemen (that is, the Anarchists): Hands off the revolution; you have no place among us."

A PROTEST AGAINST ARRESTS IN YEKATERINOSLAV

On the night of March 12, upon the order of the Revolutionary Military Committee, searches and arrests were effected in the hotels '*France*', '*Palmira*' and in the '*Babushkin House*', on Karetny Street.

According to the representatives of the Soviet government, these arrests were brought about by the robberies which became frequent of late. The alleged aim of these arrests was to catch the bandits.

The searches were made by the notorious "sickle battalion". The members of this battalion made a thorough search, not even omitting the underwear, all of which was accompanied by the loss of many small items.

The arrested, who were not even permitted to put on their clothes, were beaten up during the search. Besides, the hotel '*France*' was peppered with bullets, while each room in the hotel '*Palmira*' was fired at without any warning by members of the battalion who made their way to the second floor by climbing the balcony.

N. Bilkovsky, Social-Democrat, members of the Soviet and secretary of the Economic Council who lived in the *Babushkin House*, had his revolver and 600 rubles taken away from him.

Two passers-by were arrested on the street, their only crime being that they were Anarchists.

Had all this for its real aim the capturing of bandits, we would confine ourselves to an energetic protest against beatings and brutal treatment of people; but it turned out that none of the robbers were taken, in view of which the Revolutionary Committee declared that these searches and beatings of Anarchists were due to a misunderstanding and that it was ready to extend apologies on that score.

We declare that the Revolutionary Committee knows very well the whereabouts and the "hangouts" of the bandits and that is why we cannot feel satisfied with explanations and apologies of these kinds.

We declare that what took place was not a mistake, not a misunderstanding, but an act of thuggery and provocation on the part of the gentlemen now heading the Revolutionary Committee. And we raise our voice in protest against this hooliganism.

(*"Golos Anarchista"*, March 18, 1918).

THE ARREST OF ANARCHISTS

PETROGRAD. — The meeting of the Anarchist Federation of the Baltic fleet protests against arrests of Anarchists of the Moscow-Fastov district and demands their immediate release.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 166, March 29, 1918).

ANARCHISTS IN VORONEZH

Of late, an Anarchist group made its appearance in Voronezh. It found some backing among the local troops, the armored car detachment, and it began to assert itself by seizing buildings and extorting from one of the local wealthy men a sum of twenty-five thousand rubles. In this connection the Executive Committee issued a proclamation declaring that searches and arrests can be made only by those who are authorized by the Administrative section of the Soviet. Those who are guilty of infracting those rules will be placed on trial before the Military Tribunal.

Yesterday the population of the city was alarmed by rumors circulating to the effect that the Anarchists were planning avert action against the Soviet authorities. The Anarchists did try to terrorize the population by parading through the town with their armored cars. The threats of the Anarchists were forestalled by the special and ener-

getic measures taken by the local Soviet. Last night passed quietly. Further seizures of houses by the Anarchists will be stopped. Those already held by the Anarchists will be taken away from them. The Soviet Executive Committee will not stop before any resolute measures.

*Released by the Information Bureau of the
VORONEZH SOVIET, March 25, 1918.
("Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva", No. 86,
March 27, 1918.)*

THE APRIL POGROM IN MOSCOW

(Government Documents and Releases of the Government Press)

THE RELEASE OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COMMITTEE TO STRUGGLE AGAINST THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION (CHE-KA)

The Extraordinary Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution, Sabotage and Speculation, reports:

"On the night of April 12, the All-Russian Extraordinary Committee undertook the disarming of bands styling themselves as Anarchists. The operation drew on through the night and had to be carried over into the following day. In some places there was armed resistance. Details of the course and results of the operation will be communicated after the latter has been brought to an end."

The All-Russian Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution and Speculation invites all citizens who have suffered from the attacks of robber bands to appear at the militia headquarters, (the criminal department of the Militia) for the purpose of identifying the hold-up men detained during the disarming of the Anarchist groups. The identification process will continue three days beginning April 13.

*The Chairman of the Extraordinary Committee
(Che-Ka) Dzerzhinsky*

*("Znamia Trouda", the organ of the Central Committee of the
Left Social-Revolutionist Party, No. 179, April 13, 1918).*

AN OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION

Yesterday the population was stirred by the cannonading and rifle fire which broke forth on the streets of the city; but to an even greater extent it was aroused during the last few months by ceaseless hold-ups taking place in houses and apartments, by the increasing robberies and murders perpetrated under the cover of various Anarchist groups, some of whom were affiliated with the Anarchist Federation of Moscow, while others were independent units.

Notwithstanding the most challenging trenchant ideological criticism of the Soviets and the Soviet Power on the part of the Anarchist papers ("Anarchy", "Golos Trouda", etc.) the Moscow Soviet refrained from taking any repressive measures against the Anarchists, hoping that those elements within the movement who are genuinely permeated with the idea of Anarchism will find within themselves sufficient strength to purge their movement from the criminal and arrantly counter-revolutionary elements operating under the cover of various self-styled Anarchist groups, such as "Immediate Socialists", "Independents", "Hurricane", "Death" and others. At the same time the Moscow Soviet had definite information to the effect that entire counter-revolutionary groups are joining the Anarchist armed detachments, having for their aim the utilization of the latter for some kind of overt action against the Soviet power. And already the Anarchist press and speakers called upon their followers to start upon this course of action directed against the Soviet. Criminals, with a long record of murders and robberies, found refuge in the mansions, houses seized by the Anarchists. Not a day passed without murders and robberies being committed under the cover of the Anarchist flag. The mansions sequestered by the Anarchists allegedly for the purpose of educational and cultural work were being looted and ransacked; the furniture and valuables were being sold to private people, these sales becoming the source of enrichment for a few individuals but not means for the satisfaction of social needs. The mansions themselves, as it was pointed out, became refuges for criminals.

A veritable danger arose before the Soviet and the entire population; twenty-five mansions seized in various parts of the city and armed with machine guns, bombs, bomb throwers and rifles became veritable nests of potential counter-revolutionary action. Notwithstanding the manifold assurances given by the high-minded elements among the Anarchists to the effect that no hostile action against the Soviet

power will be permitted, the danger of such action has become quite real; of late, threats to that effect were frequently voiced by some Anarchist groups. The Council of People's Commissars, the Soviet of the Moscow Province and the Presidium of the city soviet of Moscow found themselves facing the necessity of liquidating the criminal adventure, of disarming the Anarchist groups. We are keenly aware of the fact that an armed conflict would result in the loss of human lives, but we justified such a clash on the ground that to hold off any longer would lead to the increase of daily robberies and murders emanating from the Anarchist held mansions and houses. It was preferable to perform a quick operation rather than drag out the painful struggle.

On the night of April 12, armed units of the Soviet Power, acting in accordance with a preconceived plan, launched the work of disarming the Anarchists. The instructions given were to avoid bloodshed as much as possible. In most cases those instructions were carried out in full, but in some places the resistance was fierce and victims fell on both sides: there were wounded and killed among the Anarchists as well as among the attacking troops.

A few hundred armed people, who at first had shown resistance and then surrendered, were arrested. A thorough check-up will be made as to who's who, the degree of everyone's complicity in the crimes committed. In the near future, the results of this check-up, as well as the reports on the casualties of this struggle, will be made known to the public. Big stocks of arms were requisitioned in these mansions: bombs, hand grenades, a few dozen machine guns and bomb throwers, a huge quantity of rifles, revolvers and cartridges. The very fact that such large stocks of arms were in the hands of overtly counter-revolutionary and criminal elements constituted a veritable threat to the population of the city.

Apart from arms, also found there were large hoards of gold and valuables which were all looted during many robberies.

The Council of People's Commissars of the city of Moscow and of the Moscow province, together with the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet, herewith declared that they intend to push the whole thing to the very end. They are not struggling against the Anarchist organizations and against the Anarchist idea or propaganda. The closing of their paper is but a temporary act, warranted by the emergencies of the moment.

The Presidium of the Moscow Soviet calls upon the population of

the city to remain calm; any attempt at avert action will be put down with all the means at the disposal of the authorities, for we realize that the unavoidable casualties suffered in this course of necessary action will save us from a much greater bloodshed entailing a much greater loss of life — all of which would come as a matter of course if the Soviet did not liquidate the criminal work of the armed bands of counter-revolutionary plug-uglies and hold-up men camouflaged as Anarchists.

The Moscow Soviet especially appeals to the workers: men and women of Moscow to maintain revolutionary order, which is so necessary at this moment when it is urgent to shape the dislocated national economy of the Soviet Republic surrounded on all sides by open and hidden enemies.

*The Council of People's Commissars of Moscow
and the Moscow province.*

The Presidium of the Moscow Soviet

(Saturday, April 13, 1918).

*(“Znamia Trouda”, No. 179, April 13, Saturday, 1918. The same also
in “Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva”, No. 102, April 14, 1918).*

THE DISARMING OF THE ANARCHISTS

(A Press Bureau Release)

On the basis of the information supplied by the Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution, Sabotage and Speculation (Che-Ka), the events that took place on the night of April 12 in Moscow can be reconstructed in the following fashion:

Already a few days prior to the last events one began to notice an ever growing number of incidents deliberately brought about by the Anarchist circles in order to provoke some sort of overt action against the Soviet Power. It was established that among the armed units grouping around the Anarchist Federation were found a number of White Guardists and high ranking members of the Black hundreds. It was the latter that were chiefly instrumental in committing a number of prejudicial acts directed against the Soviet Power.

Thus, for instance, on April 9, a group of unknown persons, who were armed with bombs and firearms, halted the automobile of the American Red Cross delegate and forced the latter to abandon his car. The persons guilty of this assault claimed to belong to the Anarchist Federation.

Among other people arrested during the disarming was a certain man by the name Kephye, a member of the Anarchist Federation, who took an active part in the looting of the underwear warehouse of the All-Russian Union of Zemstv.*) The Anarchist Federation lodged a protest against this arrest, insisting that Kephye was an Anarchist of pure convictions and that his participation in plundering of the warehouses had been actuated by pure motives. The protest was couched in strong terms and was accompanied by a demand for the immediate liberation of Kephye. The ultimatum was turned down, this led to several clashes between the Anarchists and Soviet patrols. Kephye had to give up, yielding his arms under threat of being shot.

On April 9, it became known that armed action was being contemplated for the following day by the Anarchists. The staff of "The Black Guards" and "The Home of Anarchy" were declared in a state of emergency. The action of the Anarchists were construed by the Extraordinary Committee (Che-Ka) as preliminary steps toward an armed anti-soviet rebellion which threatened to develop into an outburst on the part of the pogrom making elements of the Black Hundreds and similar counter-revolutionary organizations, which might avail themselves of the threatened Anarchist action as an expedient for the carrying out of their own designs. In view of all this, the Extraordinary Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution (Che-Ka) resolved to effect the disarming of the Anarchist Black Guards and to clear the seized mansions of their Anarchist occupants.

During the night the Anarchist detachments were disarmed; here and there an exchange of shots took place between both sides, the Anarchist Black Guards having offered resistance in some places. A huge quantity of arms was taken away from the Anarchists: bombs, rifles, machine-guns and even cannons. All the houses held by the Anarchists, including "The Home of Anarchy" and "The House of Independent Anarchists", were cleared of their occupants.

A veritable arsenal containing all sorts of weapons — from revolvers to mountain cannons — was found in "The Home of Anarchy". The basement of this house was stocked with food supplies.

A few casualties resulted from the clashes; five people were killed

*) Zemstvo—provincial elective bodies possessed under the old regime a limited degree of self-rule and therefore were permeated with a liberal spirit. During the war they were an important factor in organizing supplies for the front.

and wounded. Approximately 400 people were arrested and sent to Kremlin, where the Che-Ka was holding an inquest into the whole affair. The arrested represented a motley crew: there were many women and children and also raw youths still wearing their high school uniforms. A number of prisonres were found to have been notorious criminals, with a long record of criminal acts in the past.

The newspaper "Anarchy" was suspended by the order of the Che-Ka. Nearly all the leaders of the Anarchist faction, grouped around the organ published by the Federation, "Anarchy", were rounded up. This was done in order to establish the degree to which they were responsible for the action of the Anarchist detachments.

The investigation is being conducted with extraordinary speed. More than twenty investigators are engaged in this work.

("Znamia Trouda", No. 179, April 13, 1918).

ONE OF THE BANDITS

(In Memory of Comrade Khodounov)

During the wrecking of the Moscow Anarchist Federation, the Bolshevik authorities executed one of the Federation's most active workers, Comrade Khodounov.

He was known as an honest and sincere comrade not only among Anarchists but wherever he had an opportunity to work.

He was one of the workers of the Telephone shops and as such he enjoyed high confidence among his fellow employees. He organized an Anarchist group at the factory. The workers elected him as their representative to the Soviet of one of the Moscow boroughs.

During the October days comrade Khodounov organized a fighting unit consisting of Anarchist workers living in various districts of Moscow. He spent several sleepless night at the sessions of the Soviet which at that time were held day and night. And he was one of the first to announce to the Federation the joyful news of the final victory of the workers.

Due to his energy the Telephone shops passed into the hands of the workers. As one of the organizers of this enterprise, comrade Khodounov threw himself into his work, spending days and nights at his task, neglecting even the most necessary rest.

When the food crisis came, the workers of the Telephone shops designated comrade Khodounov as the delegate of their purchasing

committee which went south to obtain bread. Khodounov came back to Moscow after a six week absence. That was just on the eve of the break-up of the Federation by the Bolshevik authorities.

Among the victims of this savage, unwarranted assault upon the revolutionary organization of Moscow Anarchists was also comrade Khodounov. He was arrested as "a bandit", dragged to the Criminal Department of the Police and booked as an underworld character. This was done in spite of the fact that even the Bolsheviks paid homage to him as a member of the Borough Soviet and as an active worker of the Central Soviet.

On the way to the prison this "bandit" was shot. And then the Bolsheviks keep on affirming that they are combating only the casual criminal element among the Anarchist and not Anarchism as an honest, ideological movement.

(*"Uralsky Nabat"*, No. 2, 1919).

THE SESSION OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN SOVIETS. THE PLENUM OF APRIL 15.

The floor is given to comrade Ghe who, speaking in the name of the faction of Anarchist-Communists, moves to place on the order of the day the question of the break-up of Anarchist organizations on the night of April 12.

Under the semblance of waging a struggle against banditism, said the speaker, the Bolshevik power, which, according to Lenin, is now falling back upon its second line of defense, broke up the centers of Anarchist ideological propaganda, accompanying this deliberate wrecking by mass arrests and executions of the representatives of the ideological Anarchism.

Comrade Sverdlov, the chairman, moves to accept the question of the breaking up of Anarchist organizations in the form of an interpellation, but at the same time to defer its discussion till the following session of the Executive Committee when the Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution (Che-Ka) will have been able to prove, on the basis of documentary facts in its possession, that the struggle which took place in Moscow on the night of April 12 was not directed against Anarchism as an ideological movement, but against criminal elements which only camouflaged their activity with the name of Anarchism.

The motion is accepted.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 181, Tuesday, April 16, 1918).

A SESSION OF THE VZIK (CENTRAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF THE SOVIETS).

An Interpellation About the Anarchists.

The last session of the Vzik was taken up with discussions on the interpellation concerning the disarming of the Anarchists.

Comrade Zaks gave a report about the actions of the Extraordinary Committee. He gave actual information concerning the causes which led to the disarming and also about the way in which investigation of the affair is proceeding. Following the discussions in which Kogan-Bernstein, Ghe, Sosnovsky, Lindov, Martov, participated, the following suggested by Sosnovsky was adopted:

“The Central Executive committee, having heard the explanations of the Extraordinary committee concerning its action in liquidating the criminal elements who were working under cover of Anarchist phraseology, upholds this action of the Committee, expressing its confident hope that from now on a relentless struggle will be waged against such elements. The Central Executive committee states herewith that the actions of the Extraordinary committee (Che-Ka) has for its aim not the persecution of the Anarchist movement and its underlying ideology but the struggle against banditry regardless of the name under which the latter might choose to cloak its activities.”

(“*Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva*”, No, 103, April 23, 1918).

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE EXTRAORDINARY COMMITTEE
TO STRUGGLE AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTION (CHE-KA)

At the session of the Central Executive committee held on April 18, the left Social-Revolutionist delegate, Zaks, took upon himself the doubtful honor of defending the tactics of the Bolshevik authorities in their assault upon the houses occupied by the Anarchists and in instituting an investigation into the activity of those who had been arrested in those houses.

In his speech, Zaks declared quite definitely that some of those who had been arrested will be set free, but the others will be kept in prison until the Revolutionary Tribunal passes upon their case.

Zaks denied rumors of shootings of Anarchists by the Che-Ka or that the latter intends to revert to that measure in the case of the Anarchists.

However, I myself heard Peters, a member of the Extraordinary committee (Che-Ka), saying that some of those who were arrested will be shot.

The conversation took place on April 17, with the participation of Alexander Ghe.

When the latter asked Peters whether it is true that shootings had already taken place on April 12, Peters answered: "Not yet, but some of the arrested will surely be shot".

"Will be shot by the decision of the Extraordinary Committee!" I said in amazement.

"Yes, by the decision of the Extraordinary Committee. What is it that amazes you?" he asked.

"In Petrograd," he continued, "sixteen of the arrested Anarchists were shot by our decision. Here, among the arrested, we have characters who will have to be dealt with in the same manner."

"But," Ghe retorted, "even the official communication released in connection with the break-up of the Anarchist quarters, declares that those who haven't been freed will be turned over to the Revolutionary Tribunal."

"We are not aware of such a statement," said Peters. "But of course," he added, "if any instructions come from the Council of People's Commissars, there won't be any shootings."

I told Peters at that time that I did not consider the interview we had with him in the nature of a private conversation, and that I therefore asked him officially to confirm or to renounce his previous statement.

His answer was the following: "Everyone knows that we shoot those we believe deserve this form of punishment. That we do it after the inquest is held and not on the spot is only helpful towards the full investigation of all the circumstances and finding out the accomplices of the crime."

Putting Peters' statements alongside the one made by Zaks and also taking into view the rather mysterious circumstances attending the shooting of the two arrested on the night of April 12, I am submitting two questions to the Extraordinary Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution and Speculation (Che-Ka):

1) Which one of the two members of the Committee, Zaks or Peters, express the opinion of the Committee as a whole?

2) Will the tactic of cold-blooded murder without the benefit of trial be applied toward those that had been arrested on April 12,

and likewise towards others that might be arrested in the future — that is, toward unarmed, helpless, bound and gagged people?

To what extent all this harmonizes with the lofty principles upon which the Socialist Republic is built—I leave out of consideration.

G. KRAMAROV

Member of Vzik (Central Executive Committee of the Soviets).

(“Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva”, No. 106, April 20, 1918; the same also in “Znamia Trouda”, No. 185, April 21, 1918).

RESOLUTION OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET

The following resolution was adopted at the session of April 18, 1918:

The Petrograd Soviet, having discussed the question of disarmament of Anarchists in Moscow, resolved: Any attempt to come out against the Soviet government, camouflaged as such an attempt might be, and any work tending to bring disorganization into the ranks of the proletariat should be nipped in the bud. Therefore, the Petrograd Soviet upholds the acts of the Moscow Soviet in this direction, deeming their acts in harmony with the interest of the socialist revolution. To the fellow workers who follow the Anarchists and to the high-minded and principled Anarchists the Soviet declares:

“1) They should realize the necessity of drawing a line between themselves and the shady elements who should be ousted from the ranks of revolutionary workers; 2) they must realize that if they choose the course of open struggle against the soviets they will come to play, wittingly or unwittingly, the hand of the counter-revolution.

“Down with the disorganization of the revolutionary proletarian ranks!

“Long live the rigorous discipline.

“Resolution adopted unanimously.”

(“Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva”, No. 106, April 20, 1918).

MOSCOW SOVIET SESSION HELD ON MAY 21

Acting upon the report given by Comrade Zaks on disarming the Anarchists, the session adapted a resolution which points out that the disarming of elements acting under the Anarchist flag was brought about by the necessity of putting an end to armed hold-ups and seizures committed by groups and individuals calling themselves Anarchists.

(“Znamia Trouda”, No. 207, May 22, 1918).

THE PRISONERS ARE OFFICIALLY EXAMINED

*The Examination of the Arrested Anarchists by the Che-Ka
Two or Three Days Following the Arrests.*

The criminal squad of the Militia identified a number of "Anarchists" as criminals who have been sought by the militia for some time. Most of the arrested Anarchists have been transferred from Kremlin to the Butrisky prison and placed in the section reserved for criminals.

The principled Anarchists who were arrested with others will be set free within a few days.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 181, April 16, 1918).

ANARCHIST SET FREE

The inquest on the Anarchist case is drawing to an end; by now about 350 people have already been released. About sixty "Anarchists" are still detained; most of these are people with a criminal past and are now being indicted on charges of murder and robberies.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 183, April 19, 1918).

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The inquest held on the Anarchist case is drawing to an end. By now 350 people have been released. Only fifty "Anarchists" have been left in prison; most of them have a long criminal record and are being charged with murder, hold-up and other crimes of that nature.

(*"Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva"*, No. 106, April 20, 1918).

ANARCHISTS IN THE BUTIRSKY PRISON

On Wednesday, of the Passion Week, a group of Anarchist workers, who are kept in the Butirsky prison, declared a hunger strike as a protest against the dragging on of the preliminary investigation of their case. The prisoners demanded that the Extraordinary Committee (Che-ka) either release them immediately since they have nothing in common with ordinary criminals, or that they be presented with a clearly formulated indictment. The hunger strike lasted only one day, after which it was given up voluntarily by the Anarchists.

The investigation, which is nearing its end, was held up only in the case of those "Anarchists" who, as it was revealed by the Militia, have a record of recent criminal activity.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 196, Thursday, May 9, 1918).

WE LOOK INTO THE DOCUMENTS

Following the horrors of the raids upon the Anarchists, murders, the abominable treatment of the arrested and the unlawful deprivation of freedom, the Bolsheviks and Left Socialist-Revolutionist government was compelled to release at first the "genuine" Anarchists, then 350 others, leaving only 50 alleged "bandits", and finally even those were freed.

None of those who were arrested on the night of April 12, were given a hearing.

What would the Bolsheviks say if such a "purge" were undertaken within their own ranks?

Lenin would say the same which he had said when the Provisional Government accused the Bolsheviks of sheltering in their ranks monarchists, stool pigeons, shady elements, thieves and holdup men. Lenin said then: "What do we see now? Instead of freedom we see the old arbitrary rule come back again. Workers' printing places are being closed again, workers' papers are closed. Bolsheviks are arrested frequently on no charges at all or on trumped up patently slanderous charges.

"We are told in reply that the persecutions of Bolsheviks do not constitute an infringement of liberty, for it is only specific persons that are persecuted on specific charges. But this rejoinder is a deliberate and manifest lie, for how is it possible to wreck printing places, and close newspapers because of the misdemeanors of a few individuals, even when such charges have been proved and acknowledged by the court? It would be altogether different, were the government to outlaw the entire Bolshevik party views and tendencies. But everyone knows that nothing of this sort was done, or could be done by the government of Free Russia." (*Lessons of the Revolution*," pages 31-32, section 2, vol. 14, Moscow, 1923).

Replace the word Bolsheviks by Anarchists, and we find Lenin condemning his own action.

What do the official "documents" say?

1) That the Council of People's Commissars of U. S. S. R., the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet and the Presidium of Ve-Che-Ka committed a crime against the Constitution by not having asked the all-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets

and the Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet to sanction the "disarming" of Anarchists.

2) That the all-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets and the Moscow Soviet committed a crime against the Constitution by having sanctioned the actions of the Sovnarkom and the Ve-Che-Ka only on the basis of a mere verbal declaration made by a member of the Ve-Che-ka Presidium, Zaks, and not upon the documented report of the special investigation committee.

3) That the Bolsheviks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionary government did not possess any data, prior or after the pogrom, confirming the charges made against the Anarchists.

4) That when all the arrested Anarchists were released without any one having been arraigned before the court, the all-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviets and the Moscow Soviet committed a crime by not having appointed an investigation committee and not having prosecuted the *Sovnarkom* and the *Presidium Ve-Che-Ka* for the murder of Khodounov and the illegal imprisonment of Anarchists.

5) That the Sovnarkom, the Ve-Che-Ka Presidium and the Moscow Soviet did not have any right to introduce mutual responsibility for the actions of individuals, and to hold responsible for such actions the entire party. The Central Executive Committee of the Soviets had no right to sanction it.

6) That in view of all the abovesaid, the routing of the Anarchists was in the nature of a plot of two parties against the third one, and that in order to consummate this plot, those parties reverted to the most revolting slanders and calumnies.

POGROMS FOLLOW IN PETROGRAD AND IN THE PROVINCES

DISARMING OF ANARCHISTS

The disarming of the Petrograd Anarchists began on the night of April 22.

The Fukum regiment of Latvian Sharpshooters was drawn up before the Zabalkansky Prospect. Machine guns and cannons were trained upon the Moscow gates where the Anarchist club was located (Volkova street). At three o'clock at night the club was surrounded by troops and the search began.

Large stocks of arms were found in the club: boxes filled with cartridges, hand grenades, bombs, and also huge supplies of food products, mainly flour and sugar and lots of clothes of various descriptions.

The arms, ammunition, food supplies seized in the club were shipped to the premises of the Latvian regiment.

On the way, the Anarchists assaulted the trucks carrying those shipments; their intention being to recover the arms seized from them by Soviet troops. The attempt, however, was frustrated by the energetic action of the troops.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 187, April 24, 1918).

COMMUNICATION SENT BY COMRADE URITZKY

PETROGRAD—Concerning disarming of Anarchists effected on April 22, comrade Uritzky declared that by now the operation has been brought to a successful end: the reports of arrests among Anarchists are unwarranted; the Anarchists who had been detained were released as soon as their identity was established. Likewise, the report of Bleichman *) being kept under arrest is just as false; he was only detained for a short while and was set free as soon as the whole matter was cleared up.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 188, April 25, 1918).

THE RESOLUTION OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET

The session was opened by comrade ZINOVIEV, who moved that the question of the disarming of the Petrograd Anarchists be taken up for immediate discussion. The motion was accepted.

Comrade Uritzky reports. "Acting in accordance with the ruling

*) A prominent Petrograd Anarchist, a member of Soviet, died in 1920.

of the Council of Commissars of the Petrograd Commune", Uritzky declared, "the Che-Ka forces disarmed at dawn all those Anarchist clubs and organizations where, as it was reported by the investigation committee, arms were to be found. I categorically deny that this disarmament was undertaken in connection with the rumors of alleged preparations made by the Anarchists with the aim of coming out against the Soviet government. You know well that what we have to face now as a so-called Anarchist movement is something that has very little to do with Anarchism as an ideological movement, which we deeply respect like any other revolutionary ideology.

"We are now facing something altogether different. Under the flag of Anarchism operate shady elements who are guilty of a number of crimes, of which we have a full description.

"The disarming of the Petrograd Anarchists was done with the direct participation of the district Soviets and was not attended with any excesses. No one was arrested.*)

"I firmly declare in the presence of all of you, that the Soviet Government, the government of the revolutionary proletariat, never fought and will never combat Anarchism as a movement based upon and proceeding from ideas. Our only aim is to purge this movement as such".

Comrade Yermolayev spoke in the name of the Left Social-Revolutionists. He declared that his faction fully agrees on this question with the point of view expressed by comrade Uritzky, since criminal Anarchy can lead to results which are "pleasing" only to the counter-revolutionists.

The floor was then given to the representative of factions who sharply criticised the action of the Soviet government in disarming the Anarchists. Following those speeches, the session adopted a resolution expressing approval of the action of the Soviet authorities.

The Resolution

Having heard the report of Comrade Uritzky concerning the disarmament of self-styled Anarchist groups, which by the use of armed force seize buildings, private houses, and factories, which find their quarters in gambling houses and dives, the Petrograd

*) . . . "shady elements" . . . and "no one was arrested"! . . . It is remarkable!

Soviet of Workers and Red Army deputies express their approval of the action of the Extraordinary Committee to Struggle Against Counter-revolution, (Che-ka). The Soviet declares that the carrying of arms in the Russia of toilers—especially in the Petrograd Commune—can be entrusted only to those who stand on guard of the interests of the proletariat, who are ready to defend its conquests. At the same time the Petrograd Soviet warns all those who carry on the work of disorganization—whatever be the name under which they may choose to operate—that any attempt to tear down or demoralize the revolutionary conquests will be drastically suppressed. The Soviet (Central) calls upon the district Soviets to keep a close watch over the shady elements, who are the enemies of the working class and whose activity can be of a great use to the counter-revolution. The Soviet urges the district organizations to prevent the occurrence of provocative excesses attempted by those elements within the confines of the Petrograd Workers' Commune.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 188, April 25, 1918).

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ANARCHISTS

(From our Petrograd correspondent)

The Extraordinary Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution and Speculation (Che-ka) released for publication the following report concerning the struggle against the Anarchists.

It is pointed out in this appeal that the Petrograd Soviet, acting in conjunction with its district organizations and the Extraordinary Committee to Struggle Against Counter-Revolution and Speculation (Che-Ka) requested the population to turn in their arms to their respective Soviet institutions or to obtain permits from the district Soviets.

But various groups and individuals who call themselves Anarchists or who are affiliated with the Anarchist Federation, keep on ignoring this demand on the part of the Soviet authorities; not only do they fail to surrender their arms but they actually keep on augmenting their supplies by resorting to all sorts of illegal methods. Somehow they acquired quite a number of machine guns.

There was quite a noticeable stir among suspicious elements who are well known to the Criminal Department of the Militia,

The latest information was that faked search and arrest warrants

are being manufactured by individuals who call themselves Anarchists or who claim affiliation with the Anarchist Federation.*)

The Committee of Struggle Against Counter-Revolution (Che-ka), acting with the sanction of the Council of Commisars of the Workers' Commune, decided to effect the disarming of the Anarchists throughout the city.

The Extraordinary Committee (Che-ka) declares that it does not intend to combat the principled Anarchist movement. It recognizes the full right of the Anarchists, which they share with other Soviet parties, to engage in propaganda, agitation, and organizational work. The Extraordinary Committee does not intend to criticize Anarchist theories or to enter into any polemics with the Anarchists.

The Extraordinary Committee only suggests that the Anarchists reconcile their actions, like any other group of citizens, with the ruling of the Soviet authorities, that they eliminate from their midst the criminal elements who dishonor all theories and also the doctrines of Anarchism.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 189, April 26, 1918).

ANARCHISTS AT THE FRONT

VORONEZH, 15, IV.—In one of the frontier cities of the Soviet Republic, the Anarchists seized the military staff of the district and began the work of undermining the Soviet and the life of the entire city. In order to forestall the repetition of such incidents and, also, in order to wage a successful struggle against the bandits, it was decided to effect the immediate disarmament of the Anarchists. This was especially urgent in the case of one of the Anarchist detachments which was heavily involved in the robberies and violences kept up throughout the city.

Artillery was put into action. Some of the Anarchists yielded without showing resistance, while others deserted. Certain elements among them threatened to execute a number of railroad workers before leaving. The Soviet troops had to resort to drastic measures. The Anarchists opened fire. On the part of the Soviet troops the casualties amounted to three killed and many wounded. The Anarchists were crushed.

Order was re-established. The Soviet troops are in high spirits.

*) And "no one was arrested"! . . .

The army is getting ready to repulse the Germans and Gaydamaks (Ukrainian nationalist troops).

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 181, April 16, 1918).

TAGANROG, April 17—The Marusia Nikiforova detachment was disarmed. Nikiforova herself was arrested and turned over to the Revolutionary Tribunal*) This was done in spite of the protest of local Anarchists. Most of the members of this detachment went over to the local Soviet troops.

(*"Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva"*, No. 107, April 21, 1918).

HUNGER REVOLTS AND THE ANARCHISTS

SMOLENSK, April 19—Serious disorders took place recently. These disorders are directed by the Anarchists who carry on agitation among the unemployed. A few shipments of wine were detained; the shipments were intended by the Anarchists for the meetings of unemployed. The Anarchists had the prison guards drunk but these were replaced in time by a more reliable element.

(*"Golos Troudovogo Krestianstva"*, No. 107, April 21, 1918).

NIZHNI-NOVGOROD

On April 23 shooting of a provocative nature broke out on some of the city streets, especially on the Bolshaya Pokrovka. It still is not clear what brought about these shootings, nor has it been found out who was back of it. One thing has been established, though: among those who took part in it were Anarchists and cadets. There were also some red-army men participating in the affray. The Soviet institutions took the necessary precautionary measures for the safeguarding of the People's Bank; machine-guns were placed at the most strategic positions, armored automobiles were sent cruising throughout the city. The shooting lasted all day, having subsided only toward the evening. It resulted in several casualties, a few people were wounded. The number of wounded has not yet been established.

The Executive Committee of the Soviet was called into extra session and declared martial law in the city. Measures were taken to find out the causes and immediate occasions leading to the outbreak of the shootings.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 188, April 25, 1918)

*) She was acquitted.

WHAT HAPPENED IN NIZHNY-NOVGOROD?

The events in Nizhni-Novgorod, according to the Official reports, have transpired in the following order. Of late, some unknown persons appeared among the Soviet troops and are carrying on a whispering campaign and criminal agitation against the Soviet government. These persons have succeeded in leading a small group of armed red army men to open hostile action against the Soviet authorities. At the same time, by a mere subterfuge, telling an entire regiment that the Soviet is in danger, the same provocative elements have succeeded in inducing this regiment to come out in the street allegedly for the defense of the Soviet. Someone started shooting with the aim of causing a panic in the city. A few of the Red Army detachments sent out by the Soviet for the purpose of maintaining order in the city were wounded during exchange of shots.

The loyal troops succeeded within a short time in restoring order and liquidating the attempts at rebellion.

The investigation of the circumstances leading to these disorders is now being conducted. There is information to the effect that shady elements had a great deal to do with instigating disorders in the city. One of the machine-guns used by the anti-soviet forces was placed on the roof of the *Prispeshnikov* house, where *Yeshin*, a prominent member of the Cadet party lives. His son, an army officer, was involved in a counter-revolutionary plot. Another machine gun was placed near the house occupied by the Anarchist Federation.

The Committee To Struggle against Counter Revolution (Che-ka) arrested several suspects.

Full order reigns now in the city.

A detachment sent to aid the local Soviets, arrived from Moscow.
(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 189, April 26, 1918)

VOLOGDA—A detachment of Red Army soldiers and Red-Guardists armed with machine guns, cleared the hotel "Europa" from the Anarchists who had this building in their possession for some time. The Anarchists were disarmed. The disarmament went on smoothly and was not attended with casualties. At first the Anarchists presented an ultimatum, but after short time they surrendered and gave up their weapons. Following a brief detention and a close examination, the arrested Anarchists were released.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 188, April 25, 1918).

KAZAN 6,V—A Red Army squad liquidated the robberies and the senseless pogrom which broke loose in the town of *Elabuga*. An Extraordinary committee was set up for the purpose of investigating the whole affair. The Soviet power, disorganized at first by the avert action of the Anarchists, has now been fully reestablished.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 196, May 9, 1918).

SMOLENSK, 6, V—The Anarchist Federation of Smolensk left town, because the Federation lost its influence with the masses when Soviet power became fully established.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 196, May 9, 1918).

SAMARA—The Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Samara province passed into the hands of the Anarchists and Maximalists, (Extreme left wing of Social Revolutionists).

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 187, April 24, 1918).

SAMARA, 7, V—On the night of May 7, the revolutionary Soviet troops disarmed the Anarchist groups, which refused to comply with the orders of the Soviet authorities. The search revealed large stocks of arms hidden away in buildings occupied by the Anarchists. The Maximalists (extreme left wing of the Social Revolutionists) were also disarmed.

"The Communards" in defiance of the orders of the Soviet government, left the Orenburg front and betook themselves to marauding and plundering. The Soviet troops seized from them large stocks of arms which consisted of cannons, machine-guns, bombs, etc. No resistance was offered, nor were there any casualties.

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 196, May 9, 1918).

TELEGRAMS OF THE COMMISSARIAT OF INNER AFFAIRS SENT TO ALL SOVIETS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

"The Experience of Moscow, Petrograd and other cities showed that under the protective flag of Anarchist organizations operate thugs, thieves, gangsters, hold-up men and counter-revolutionists who are actively preparing to subvert the Soviet government. They have been arming themselves for that purpose, in the pursuance of which they also carry on the work of demoralization among the backward groups of the population. All the Anarchist squads and organizations are to be disarmed. No one is allowed to carry arms unless granted a permit by the local Soviets".

(*"Znamia Trouda"*, No. 198, May 11, 1918).

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

KURSK.—By order of comrade *Podvoysky*, a detachment of irregular under the leadership of Karpov was disarmed. This is the same detachment that came out against the local Soviet last April.

(“*Znamia Trouda*”, No. 198, May 11, 1918).

THE SAMARA EVENTS

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE SOVIET EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SAMARA, 23, V—The chief commander of the Orenburg front, acting in conjunction with the Executive Committee of the city Soviet of Orenburg, dissolved the Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Orenburg province on May 21.

This incident, unheard of in the history of the Russian Revolution, is to be accounted for by the almost total absence of workers' deputies in this Executive committee and the resulting sway of the kulak elements, who find their expression in the ideological influence of the Anarchists and Maximalists (extreme left wing of the Social-Revolutionists).

During the three months of its existence this Executive committee proved itself sterile and completely devoid of any constructive sense.

Of late, this Executive committee showed great resistance to the practical work carried on by the Revolutionary Military Committee, which was formed for the purpose of waging a struggle against Dutov and his bands by the Orenburg Soviet.

Dutov, was a counter-revolutionary kosak general, operating in the Orenburg province during the Civil War). The Revolutionary Military Committee played an important role in the frustrated attempt of the Anarchists and Maximalist hooligan bands to subvert the Soviet power in Samara.

(“*Znamia Trouda*”, No. 209, May 24, 1918).

THE ANARCHIST DENIAL

SARATOV, 23, V—The Saratov anarchists emphatically deny the reports of some newspapers about their alleged participation in the counter-revolutionary rebellion. The opposite is true: many members of the Anarchist groups actively took part in the suppression of the disorders.

(“*Znamia Trouda*”, No. 210, May 25, 1918).

THE CASE OF THE ANARCHIST GROUP OF THE CITY OF GORODETZ

Last week the Revolutionary Tribunal of Nizhni-Novgorod took up the case of the Anarchist group of Gorodetz. There were two defendants: Morev, the ex-chairman of the Soviet of Gorodetz, and Kirilov, the ex-chief of the militia. Both were accused of organizing a "gang", which called itself "The Anarchist Group of Gorodetz", and perpetrated a number of robberies in the town. They were also charged with assaulting and disarming the Military Committee in Gorodetz. The original feature of this indictment was that Morev, as alleged in the documentary material of this arraignment, gave a detailed presentation of this would be act of disarming to the regular session of the Soviet in his capacity as chairman of that body.

Many witnesses were called to the stand (there were close to forty of them); the hearing of the case dragged on for three days and despite the manifest bias of the chairman and the prosecuting attorney of the Tribunal who were determined to punish the "criminals", the defendants were acquitted by the court.

Morev and Kirilov are free now. Why then were they kept in prison for several months? Why were they snatched away from the ranks of the revolutionary army at a time when every one of us had his rightful place, when the revolutionary front was going through its most severe test and when the destiny of the revolution itself was hanging in the balance?

*("Under the Black Flag" — "Pod Chernim Znamenem" —
Anarchist Publication; No. 10, August 16, 1918,
Nizhny-Novgorod).*

THE TRUE REASONS FOR THE ANARCHIST RAIDS

(Analysis and Conclusions)

The Moscow Anarchist Federation actively participated during the October days in the street battles waged by the Moscow proletariat against the White Guardists and Right Socialists. It was represented in the Military Revolutionary Committee, and it powerfully swayed the masses of quite a number of factories and military units. Its standing was high not only with the Moscow Bolsheviks, but likewise with the population of the city. The numerical growth of the Federation was indicated by the fact that at that time there were in existence large regional groups in various sections of Moscow, like Sokolniki, Presnia, Zamoskvoriechie, Lefortovo. The growth of its influence was marked by intense interest toward Anarchist ideas on the part of the great masses of people. All that impelled the Federation to an ever greater expansion of its work. Its propagandists and lecturers were making the rounds of the factories and military barracks where meetings and lectures were frequently held. Equal attention was paid to the arranging of Anarchist lectures and mass meetings in the central part of the city. The Federation also published literature, conducted round table talk in its club rooms and issued a weekly paper "*Anarchia*".

All that however was not adequate to the needs of the moment and the tremendous interest toward the Anarchist idea shown at that time by the Moscow population. Some way for expanding organizational and propaganda activities had to be found. This could be done by getting larger headquarters for the Federation and by issuing a large daily dedicated to the Anarchist interpretation of social and political events.

Because of its power and influence the Federation succeeded in sequestering the premises of the "Kupechesky Club" (The Merchant's Club) located at the Malaya Dmitrovka, an enormous and magnificent house, luxuriously decorated and having a library and theatre. The seized premises were renamed into "Dom Anarchia"*); proving to be well suited for the most extensive and varied Anarchist activity. By that time the Federation entered into agreement with one of the largest Moscow printing shops, enabling it to start issuing a daily instead of their former weekly paper.

*) "Home of Anarchy".

By March, 1918, the Federation became a large organization in point of numbers. Apart from the work carried on outside of the "Dom Anarchia", there was also extensive activity going on within the newly acquired headquarters. Frequent and well attended lectures and mass meetings were held in the Theatre Hall of the "Dom Anarchia". A library and reading room were organized on the premises, circles of proletarian art-printing, poetry and theatre, were set up and numerous other activities of the same kind were launched.

Emulating the work of forming a Red Guard Army, the Federation set out to organize a military force of its own, the so-called "Black Guards". Another house was seized and turned into barracks for the newly formed "Black Guard" contingents. Comrade Kaydanov, an active figure in the Anarchist movement and a comrade of long standing, was commissioned with the organization and leadership of this military formation, which soon became the formal cause of Bolshevik enmity, which resulted in the spreading of vile calumnies, faked charges of subversive intentions leveled at the Anarchists, and of the final smashing up of Anarchist organizations.

At the forums held in the club rooms of the "Dom Anarchia" a number of Anarchist lecturers and speakers were carrying on Anarchist propaganda and education. Barmash, Kovalevich, Krupenin, Askarov, Piro, A. Gordin, etc., were frequently holding the platform of these forums.

Apart from the educational and propaganda work carried on in Moscow itself, Anarchist activity of the same extensive character was carried on by the provincial groups in many other cities of Central Russia: Riazan, Smolensk, Tula, Tver, Kostroma, Yaroslavl, etc.

Especially active were Kovalevich and Dvumiantzev, both syndicalist minded workers among the railway proletariat. They were carrying on cultural work, taking part in the publication issued by the union, which ultimately became outspokenly anarcho-syndicalist in its character. Their propaganda work yielded splendid results.

The workers on many railroads, such as the Moscow-Nizhni-Novgorod, Moscow-Murom, Moscow-Kazan, and other railroads followed the lead of the Anarchists. The name Kovalevich soon became the most popular one among the railway workers. An analogous situation was created on the Nikolayevsky railroad, where among other signs of Anarchist influence on this road, one had to point to the great popularity and general esteem enjoyed by the Anarcho-Syndicalist paper, "Golos Trouda".

The relative weakness of the Bolsheviks in Moscow,*) and the strong influence of the Anarchists, resulted in an adequate representation in the Moscow Soviet. There were sufficient number of Anarchists and Anarchist sympathizers among the Soviet delegates, and this created a situation whereby some problems, like the housing problem for example, were not passed upon without the representatives of the Federation participating in such deliberations. In addition, the Federation had a special desk in the Soviet, in charge of a member of the Federation, whose task was to issue writs for the seizure of various premises by the Anarchist organizations.

The situation created was such, that in the district where the Federation's headquarters "Dom Anarchia" was located, the premises assigned for sequestration, were actually distributed by the Federation. The Soviet permit for the occupation of some buildings was not sufficient, it had to be supplemented by a similar warrant issued by the Federation and signed by its secretary, Lev Cherny, or some other responsible member of the Federation. (Lev Cherny was shot by the Bolsheviks in 1921).

It is quite noteworthy that while hold-ups flourished in other districts of the city, they were rare in the district where the Federation headquarters, "Dom Anarchia", was located. The population of that district was highly pleased with that and showed, as a result, the friendliest attitude toward the Federation.

The steady growth of Anarchist influence, the great success of the organization of the Black Guards, and the numerical growth of the latter, began to disturb rather seriously the Bolsheviks and their fellow travelers, the Left Social-Revolutionists, with whom they shared power at that time. Both raised in their party and government press, a brazen and lying campaign against the Anarchists, charging them with such deadly sins as robberies, banditry, stealing and plundering the property of the seized houses, and also with sheltering many common criminals and White Guardists, who allegedly had permeated the Anarchist ranks. Following that, they began, a few days prior to their raid on the Anarchists, circulating various rumors through their press and other means at their disposal. The absurd rumors had all the marks of being a Kremlin product fabricated for the occasion. These fabrications charged that the Anarchists were preparing a plot against the Soviet power with the view of capturing Soviet power.

*) Less than 8,000 members of the party.

It was also charged that this would-be plot was timed for a definite date, and that the fact had become known to the authorities through reliable sources of information. This insinuation and calumny was being steadily pushed on by the Bolsheviks notwithstanding the official denial given it by the Anarchist papers "Anarchia" and "Golos Trouda".

In Moscow the Anarchists seized about twenty-five private houses, but it was not only the Anarchists that were quartered in those private houses. In most cases the Anarchists would have workers move with them into the occupied houses. As to the property found on the premises the Anarchists were specific in their aim to conserve any art treasures found in those houses. Thus, for instance, the Federation was the first to undetrake, under the guidance of Piro, the registration of the art treasures found in the Morosov house. (Morosov, owner of textile mills, one of the richest men in Tzarist Russia). The Federation kept a guard to insure the safety of all collections and then, acting jointly with the Moscow Soviet and Art Societies, it transferred those treasures to the respective museums.

Having prepared the ground with their lying campaigns, the Bolsheviks decided to put an end with a single blow to the Anarchist movement whose growth in Moscow and throughout the country became dangerous to them. Perhaps motivated by the problematic hope of redeeming themselves in the eyes of the European bourgeoisie by smashing up the Anarchist organizations they prepared and proceeded with their wicked plot. It was subsequently reported that the routing of the Anarchists was followed by a rise of the Russian rouble on the European exchanges.

In Moscow there were persistent reports at that time that during a whole week Trotzky had kept on haranguing the Red Army detachments stationed at Kremlin, about Anarchism and Anarchists, in an attempt to infuriate them against the latter.

When everything was ready, the authorities began their attack. On the night of April 12, 1918, troops began closing in upon the private houses quartering the Anarchists. The troops were armed with machine guns and cannons. Their tactics consisted in surrounding each house and then taking it by assault. In some cases, when awakened by the racket, the residents succeeded in improvising some sort of resistance. The Anarchists did not even know whether the assailants were the government forces, or White-Guardists, when they were presented with a demand for surrender. Those that surrendered were

taken to the Kremlin. When met with a refusal to surrender, the attacking forces subjected the houses to intensive fire from machine guns and cannons. Especially great was the damage done by that bombardment upon three houses: Federation headquarters, "Dom Anarchia", the house of "Immediate Socialists", at the Povarskaya, and the house of the Donskaya Anarchist group which was situated near the Donskoy monastery. The first two houses suffered much less than the third one, although scarred with a few gaps produced by cannon shots.

The workers surprised at the house of the "Donskaya group" thought the the assault was being made by White-Guardists. They showed fierce resistance with the result that the house was badly damaged. The rattling of the machine guns and the booming of the cannons lasted until dawn. The city was practically taken over during the night by a licentious undisciplined mob of Lettish soldiers of the Red Army, who were influenced by the Bolsheviks against the Anarchists. Passers-by were halted, and rudely subjected to searching and sometimes arrest. Thus, for instance, were assaulted members of the "Golos Trouda" editorial staff who were returning from their desk work. Zabrezhnev, Yartchuk (both became Communists) and the author of these lines. None of them, up to the moment of their detention, knew what had been going on in Moscow during that night. Their Anarchist identity having been revealed, the soldiers began dragging them away to some barracks. It was only the presence of mind and composure evinced by one of the detained that saved them from lynching.

In the morning the crime committed by the Bolshevik "Revolutionary" Government, drew to the destroyed houses, gaping crowds of well-to-do loafers. But the government had much more in store for the Anarchists. The arrested comrades were kept in abominable conditions and were treated in the most insulting manner. Threats of shooting and the choicest abuse were heaped upon them, while beating with rifle butts were administered as a matter of course. But this was not all.

Since the government alleged that the campaign had been undertaken not against *Anarchists*, but against "bandits" and "White-Guardists" who hung on to the Anarchist movement, without the latter being able to rid itself from them, it had to invite the would-be sufferers of the robberies to come and identify the "bandits". And so the bourgeois riff-raff began to pour in. The result of this "public

identification" by the enemies of the revolutionary workers were distressing in their effect. Among the "identified bandits" were many old revolutionaries like Khodounov, Kniasiev and others; others were just ordinary workers with their wives who had taken up lodging in the houses seized by the Anarchists. Some of the passers-by who happened to be dragged in during the turmoil were also identified as "bandits". Prominent Anarchists were soon released, but the others were detained. The brutal treatment of the prisoners reached its utmost in the murder of Khodounov, allegedly at the latter's attempt to escape.

Anarchist papers were suspended. "Anarchia", "Svobodnaja Kom-muna" (The Free Commune), the Anarcho-Syndicalist paper "Golos Trouda" whose morning issue was run off the press before the suspension order came in force, was compelled to close up the following day. A period of leftward terror set in. The pogrom wave swept throughout Soviet Russia. Everywhere the same terror was repeated, only on a minor scale.

The blow was well-aimed and well-timed. It was delivered before the Anarchist movement had time to crystallize itself. It was unsettled, still in the stage of becoming — of self-determination. It had not yet found itself fully, had not solidified its inner content and had not strengthened itself organizationally within and outside the factories and villages of the country. The movement had not the time to shape itself as a distinct clear-cut national organization with definitely established principles, when the unexpected hurricane of government terror swooped down upon them. The terroristic practice firmly adopted from that moment by the Bolsheviks proved to be too strong for an unsolidified movement. The terroristic policy nearly destroyed this movement, rendering impossible its further existence.

Anarchist activities went down considerably as a result of the government pogroms. The groups were broken up, and it was long before they reshaped themselves organizationally. There remained a few individuals who continued their Anarchist propaganda at factories and at the railroads where Anarchist influence persisted for some time. More than a month passed before the Federation recovered from the blow aimed at it by the government, finally succeeding in launching again its official organ "Anarchia" ("Anarchy").

The example of Moscow was followed by Petrograd and other provincial cities, and following that an official order was issued by the Commissariat of Inner Affairs to all its subordinate bodies enjoin-

ing them to liquidate the Anarchist movement in the same manner as was done in Moscow.

Already in 1917 Lenin wrote in his "*A Letter to the Comrades*", appearing in October 17, 1918 (page 283, vol. 14, "*Lenin's Works*", Moscow, 1923): "It is the nearly unanimous opinion of all, that the prevailing mood of the masses verges on despair, and favors the growth of Anarchism".

This mood did not suffer any change since that time, and now, after the October revolution, it is still desperate. Added to that there was the widespread dissatisfaction with the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty. Nearly all the Anarchists were opposed to that treaty, favoring a revolutionary war of defense against the German-Austrian troops. And when following the October revolution the German-Austrian troops began advancing upon the territory of revolutionary Russia, there arose spontaneously a movement of irregulars (formed with the consent of the government, but as far as most of them were concerned, almost independent from it), for the purpose of fighting the invaders. This movement grew after the first failure of the peace negotiations when Trotzky threw out the winged phrase "War is ended, but peace has not been signed". The Anarchists manifested a feverish activity in the organization of the partisan detachments. But following the Brest peace, those detachments began to be viewed by the Bolsheviks with a growing feeling of uneasiness. They were deemed as potentially dangerous in many respects. First, they might disrupt the peace by unwarranted action in the front zone; secondly, the Anarchist irregulars might put a damper (which, indeed, they did to some extent) upon the dictatorial policies of the Bolsheviks; thirdly, they might have a stimulating effect upon the growth of the Anarchist movement throughout the country, which would result in the expansion of its influence not only in the cities but villages as well (where often the Anarchists were virtually unknown); fourthly, they appeared dangerous as an armed force in the hands of another political party which notwithstanding its lack of an organization on a national scale, contained a potential threat of another upheaval. Such were the basic motives actuating the Government in its course of smashing up the Anarchist organizations. It certainly was not "banditry". Banditry and other calumnies alleged in the official report, were simply a convenient excuse used to camouflage the Bolsheviks' real purposes.

1919

THE PERSECUTION OF THE ANARCHISTS IN UKRAINE

A P R O T E S T

On February 9, 1919, an Anarchist lecture organized in Yekaterinoslav by the local group "Nabat" was broken up by an armed squad headed by the member of the Provisional Government in Ukraine, Mr. Averin.

The comrades were not silent about this affair. They sharply protested against this shameful act of violence, in their organ the "Nabat", published in Ekaterinoslav.

The authorities retaliated by ordering the confiscation of the issue and its forceful disposal from the newspaper stands.

Our comrades met this situation by going out on the streets and selling the paper themselves. This was too much for the new absolute rulers of the city. An armed squad confiscated and closed up the paper, broke up the place and arrested more than ten people.

The members of the organization are still kept in Ekaterinoslav jail.

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We protest against this brutish violence committed against a revolutionary organization. We protest against the suspension of our publication.

We demand freedom of revolutionary speech. We demand the inviolability of the personal rights of revolutionaries and the inviolability of the quarters of the revolutionary organizations.

We appeal for help to you, workers and Red Army men. Without your sympathies our protest will not be valid enough.

Introduce and pass resolutions of protest at your meetings. Organize your own meetings of protest.

Comrades, members of the convention of Soviet delegates! Raise the question of the Ekaterinoslav raid on the floor of the convention.

Comrades, soldiers of the Red Army of the Socialist Republic!

You have the right not to carry out blindly, without reasoning (just as it was done under the Tzar), unjust commands. You have a right to refuse to become a party to the breaking up of revolutionary organizations and revolutionary lectures.

Or is it that you have already become a blind, obedient tool in the hands of the government? In that case the revolution is already a lost thing. In that case you will rapidly be taken in hand by the new rulers.

You have to begin trying to form your own judgment of what is taking place around you. You must use your own brains and be guided accordingly.

Shame upon those who persecute revolutionists, upon those who stifle the free speech of Anarchists. Shame upon the wreckers of revolutionary organizations.

*The Anarchist Group "Nabat" of Kharkov,
("Nabat", No. 7, March 9, 1919).*

A LETTER FROM PRISON

Having come for a few days to Ekaterinoslav from the war front at Guliay-Polie, I dropped in to the Secretariat of the Anarchist Confederation in order to see a few comrades and also to buy a few issues of the "Nabat". I happened to have come at the time when the place was raided by the militiamen who arrested the members of the Secretariat. I was taken along with them, the only reason for my arrest being that I was an Anarchist.

There were thirteen of us who were arrested upon orders of the Executive Committee of the Ekaterinoslav Soviet, and we were all treated in the same manner in which political prisoners were treated by the old police of the Tzar. An armed squad took us over to the Commandant of the city of Ekaterinoslav where we were questioned and then led away to the Che-Ka. In the latter place we were mocked at and reviled by kids. The kids treated me in a way which no police agent of the old regime would ever permit himself.

After our names had been duly entered, we were led away to some sort of a cellar which lacked ventilation. There were twenty of us packed into this dark and damp kennel which is not fit even for a dog.

At one o'clock we were given another interrogation and then sent off to prison. Our convoy, an armed squad of two people, were misled to the point of regarding us as the worst scum. *They had been told that we were Petliura officers.*

Now, comrades and fellow soldiers of the irregular army, I will tell you in a few words who I am and what sort of a criminal I am.

I too am a peasant, a member of the irregular army. Like the other thirteen arrested people I am an Anarchist.

Until fourteen years of age I went to school. But already at that time I was seized with the revolutionary spirit. I could not silently look on at the mean, base, criminal starvation regime of Tzar Nicholas, under which a small handful of fortunate do-nothings enjoyed all the luxuries and blessings of life, and *did not let live others*, the millions of starving unfortunate victims who sweated to death in the mines, factories and fields, and who gave their lives away upon the battlefields for the profits of the few.

At eighteen years I was taken away to the army, where I continuously conducted propaganda against the war waged by capitalists for their own interests. I was persecuted and during the coalition government I was thrown in jail as an agitator.

After the October revolution I worked in the rural Soviet of Sursk-Litovsk, of the province of Ekaterinoslav and from there I was sent to the convention of the Peasant Soviets of the county where I had worked as an honest revolutionary until the occupation of Ukraine by the Germans and Austrians.

During the period of reaction in Ukraine I worked tirelessly in the underground organization. I was arrested several times and finally escaped.

The last time I worked with comrade Makhno. I will not go into detail as to my underground work: Those who worked underground, especially those who know the work of comrade Makhno, can tell what sort of a "counter-revolutionary" I am.

And now I ask you, Commissars: Where were you when the reaction was in full swing here, when the blood of the peasants and workers ran freely, when thousands of them were brutally whipped, tortured and executed?

Where were you when violence reigned freely in Ukraine, when the German-Austrian whip, gun, rod and bayonet were freely used on the backs of helpless workers and peasants? Where were you when the peasants rose up against the German, Austrian and Petliura regiments, when entire villages threw themselves almost barehanded against the invaders, thus clearing the way for the free life to come?

And who gave you the right to arrest, imprison and execute the sons of the Ukrainian toiling people, those who were the first to

raise the banner of revolt, who took the rifles in their hands, having told themselves: "To live as free men or to die in the struggle" — and then fulfilled those solemn promises, clearing Ukraine from the counter-revolutionary bands?

Let us have your answer, Commissars!

And you, fellow soldiers of the irregular army, who have shed so much blood, who carried upon your shoulders the heavy burden of reaction and counter-revolution, who have left so many graves of the nearest comrades, ask yourselves, at last: "In the name of what have we gone through so much suffering" ?

In the name of what, all ragged and barefooted, did we stay in the trenches in the rain, in sub-zero weather, boldly looking death into the eye?

Have we done all this so that when we come home from the front we should be arrested, imprisoned, reviled and very often executed, and all simply because we do not want to truckle to the self-made authorities, submit to laws made by power-intoxicated bureaucrats who forget to ask themselves: Who conquered freedom and at what price?

Fellow soldiers, workers and peasants! If you are in favor of this vile authoritarian rule, if you prefer to stand cruelty, violence and baseness — then suffer that mockery in silence and die submissively.

But if you do not want to stand this violence, if you want to obtain full freedom, economic and political, do not let these acts of violence pass in silence.

Protest against them to your comrades. Demand the immediate release of your fellow workers who were arrested on no charges, and demand the release of other comrades who are innocent of any crime.

Declare openly that in a free country not a single revolutionist should be subject to arrests and revilement.

*P. Mogila, member of the Makhno army
(Ekaterinoslav prison)
("Gouliay-Polie Nabat", No. 8, April 13, 1919).*

THE BOLSHEVIKS "DEEPEN" THE REVOLUTION

We have just received information from Kharkov to the effect that on April 9, the Che-Ka broke up the club of the Anarchist Federation "Nabat".

The comrades present in the club during the raid of the "red policemen" were subjected to a most painstaking and revolting search. The literature and the issues of the paper "Nabat" found on the premises were confiscated and burned, and the club itself was closed.

The alleged reason for the raiding of the Federation was, according to the Che-Ka authorities, "the spread of anti-Semitic propaganda by 'Nabat', and the call to subvert the existing Soviet government by force of arms and general propaganda of counter-revolutionary nature, which is tantamount to treason".

In Poltava a group of comrades from the group "Nabat" was arrested and their reading room closed. Their typewriter, accounts and literature were confiscated.

The Executive Committee of the Kiev Soviet "unanimously" resolved to take drastic measures in order to put an end to the Anarchist publication.

The "workers' and peasants'" government works tirelessly and energetically. The "devotion" of this government to the toilers is so great . . . that it forbids them to listen to free speech, to analyze for themselves problems of their own life as toilers, to listen to a lecture which goes beyond the framework of the ideas underlying the official policies of the Community Party. Styling itself the "workers' and peasants' government", this government shamelessly and unceremoniously bears down upon revolutionary organizations that go to the toiling masses with their propaganda of the libertarian idea. All true revolutionists are declared counter-revolutionaries by this arrogant Bolshevik government and every flunky who sold his picayune conscience to the "socialist" Che-Ka is free to do violence and to mock anyone at will.

(*"Gouliay-Polie Nabat"*, No. 8, April 13, 1919).

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANARCHISTS

The Anarchist union of the town Klintzi issued a revolutionary publication, "The Voice of the Toilers". The publishing of the latter represented a tremendous effort on the part of the organization, the money for its publication coming from workers' donations.

The Communist authorities, however, did not take it to their liking and, as a result, the paper was closed on the very day of its publication. That is why we, the Anarchists of the town of Klintzi and also a vast number of workers from the factories in Klintzi express

through our paper "Nabat" our protest against the usurpers and reactionaries of the Social Revolution — the Communist (Bolshevik) party.

At the arrest of the Secretariat of the Anarchist groups of Ekaterinoslav, the Che-Ka confiscated more than forty thousand roubles and also clothes belonging to some comrades. Neither the money nor the clothes have thus far been returned.

This money, most of which belongs to the "Black Cross" (an organization which helps Anarchist prisoners) is direly needed now, but was turned over to the State Bank by the Che-Ka and will be doled out of the Secretariat at only 250 roubles a week.

(*"Nabat"*, No. 15, May 12, 1919, *Kharkov*).

AN INFAMOUS ACT

Comrade G. was sent from Ekaterinoslav to Nikolayev with the "Nabat", issue No. 16. In view of the Grigoriev revolt this comrade had to take the Vosnesensk route in order to get from Vosnesensk to Nikolayev. In Vosnesensk he distributed a few issues of the paper to the Red Army soldiers stationed there. His action came to the knowledge of the military authorities who, enraged, dashed over to the steamer to catch the "dangerous character".

The comrade was arrested and would have been shot if not for the suggestion of one of the zealots who said: "Why kill? We should mete out to him the same treatment which is given to the Anarchists in Great Russia. Give him a taste of it; let's give him a good whipping". The advice was accepted and the comrade, a man rather weak in health, was given ten lashings with a gun rod and fifteen with a birch whip. Then this comrade was escorted to Elisovetgrad where he was released. The papers destined for the Nikolayev group were taken away and the 500 roubles given to this comrade for traveling expenses were stolen.

The overzealous hangman, being sure that this fact will not be passed in silence, warned the comrade with the following words: "You will want write about it in your paper 'Nabat'; it is for your information then that we are going to shoot any Anarchist that will pass Vosnesensk".

What is the meaning of this happening? Is it that under the guise of Bolshevism there came to life again the grim and cruel period of *Rennenkampf*, *Meller-Zakomelsky*, *Riman*, and other hangmen of the Tzar's regime?

The revolution has not yet sunk to an infamy of that kind . . . Even the Kerensky government did not permit itself such cynical and brazen acts.

And will revolutionists remain silent in the face of such facts? And won't the Bolsheviks act upon the whole matter, find the guilty ones and mete out the right punishment?

We are writing . . . We are writing to see how the Communist organization of Elisovetgrad will react to it; we expect to see some action on the part of that organization which comprises quite a number of old revolutionists with whom we happened to have worked underground with during the Tzar's regime.

We expect that the High Command of the third Army will institute an investigation of the whole affair and that it will wipe off the infamous blot which falls upon the army by virtue of the acts of some of the over-zealous "revolutionists".

But if neither of them undertake proper action, if flogging is considered quite in place for the Anarchists, then — the Anarchists themselves will have to take measures so that this act of violence should not go unpunished and that the repetition of such savage acts are made impossible.

Let us add that we are in possession of the names of the authors and inspirers of this act of savagery and that the Bolsheviks can obtain these names if they desire to do so.

("Nabat", No. 17, June 2, 1919, Kharkov).

A REPORT BY THE ANARCHIST GROUP OF KAMENSKOYE OF THE EKATERINOSLAV PROVINCE

Upon the return of our delegate from the first conference of the Anarchist Confederation, we decided to begin our work as planned but we ran up against the reluctance of the authorities to grant us quarters for a library and reading room. On the second of May we received the May issue of the "Nabat" and our comrades went out to distribute this issue all over town. Having disposed of most of his papers in the workers' quarters, one of our comrades dropped into the Soviet headquarters where he tried to sell the papers to a few Bolsheviks whom he knew personally. He was sharply called down by the chairman of the Soviet, Arsenitchev, who took away from the comrade the rest of his papers and began abusing the latter for attempting to sell "Nabat" on the Soviet premises. It was in vain

that our comrade kept on pointing out to him that the paper appears legally and that "the Anarchist group of Ekaterinoslav also works legally". The chairman simply denied all that as mere fabrications.

On the following day the members of our group, headed by a comrade who came from Ekaterinoslav, called upon Arsenichev in order to make clear the official attitude of the local authorities toward their organization: Are we considered as counter-revolutionists or are we going to be granted the status of a revolutionary organization? Arsenichev's reply was the following:

"I have already told you that if you make an attempt to distribute your newspaper and literature, I will put you in prison".

*A Member of the Anarchist Group of Kamenskoye.
("Nabat", No. 17, June 2, 1919, Kharkov).*

TO THE PILORY!

During the Grigoriev revolt, leaflets were distributed in certain localities bearing the title "To the peasants" and issued in the name of the "Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine".

The leaflet was signed by the "Peasant Section of the Pavlograd County Committee of Communist Party of Ukraine".

The leaflet contains the following gems:

"The Kulaks led by the Left Social-Revolutionists and Anarchists, instigate revolts, dissolve the Committees of Poor Peasants and Communist cells.

"Fellow Peasants! Chase away the kulaks, the Left Social-Revolutionists and the Anarchists who, by their provocative acts, try to push you onto the road leading to innumerable woes.

"Rise all to fight against the counter-revolution now represented by the Left Social-Revolutionists, Anarchists and Kulaks!"

One may disagree with us in the interpretation of the revolutionary course and tactics, but to confuse Kulaks, Anarchists and Left Social-Revolutionists as one — this is the low water mark of infamy to which up till now the Bolsheviks have not yet stooped.

To the pillory, the liars and detractors who signed this leaflet!

("Nabat", No. 17, June 2, 1919, Kharkov).

A LETTER FROM NIKOLAYEV

Our hopes to organize our work on a larger scale have not altogether been frustrated, but they were balked to a great extent by the

attitude of the local authorities. Our first attempt to organize a club was met with the opposition of the so-called "workers' and peasants' government" as represented by the Soviet Executive Committee, that is, the Communist Party which actually rules in the latter's name.

The local Anarchist group "Nabat" filed an application with the Dwellings Department asking for the grant to organize its club, reading room and library. At first we were encouraged by the seemingly favorable reception of our application, but quite casually we found out that the Head of the Dwellings Department was instructed to refrain from granting our request. And indeed, on the following day, the latter declared to our representatives that he could not grant us any place since we were Anarchists.

Indignantly aroused by this cynical frankness, we sent two comrades to the Executive Committee in order to make a declaration concerning this attitude. After many difficulties our delegates finally obtained the opportunity of facing the "fathers of the city". Having pointed out the cynical nature of the refusal to grant us quarters, we demanded an answer as to whether we have a right as a workers' revolutionary organization to demand quarters and whether we have a legal status. And if we do have a legal status, we are entitled to demand an ordinance entitling us to those quarters; and if not . . . to give reasons for the refusal.

One has to do justice to the Bolsheviks of Nikolayev. They had the courage to declare the following through their spokesman, Gordon: "Comrades, let us be open and frank about it; let us stop playing the game of diplomacy. I read your special issue of the 'Nabat' which is full of abuse of the Soviet government. As Anarchists you are sure to carry on the propaganda of your ideas and criticize the acts of the government. We know that there are elements here who are dissatisfied with the Soviet government and that in the future these elements will come from the workers' ranks (from the lumpen-proletariat, as he said)". He foresees the possibility of armed conflicts with these elements and therefore, "in order to avoid such conflicts, the Committee of the Communist party decided to turn down the request of the Anarchists for the granting of a legal status".

Incidentally, the Communists stressed the point that the Anarchists will not be molested for the time being, though the Left Social-Revolutionists will surely be arrested.

We remarked: "Seemingly we fell into the wrong place. Instead of speaking to the Executive Committee of Soviet we found ourselves

addressing the committee of the Communist Party". Sokolov (chairman of the Soviet in Nikolayev and former Anarchist hastily explained that the Communists are in the majority in the Soviet and that the rest of the delegates are on the way to join the Party and that by virtue thereof any decision of the Executive committee is the decision of the Committee of the Communist Party.

We asked whether it is known to them that in a number of cities our organizations exist legally and the Central government, as represented by comrade Rakovsky, gave us legal recognition. Sokolov's reply was that they received instructions from the center telling them not to grant any legal status to the Anarchist groups comprising the Confederation "Nabat" which is headed by Volin and Baron, and vice versa, and to extend the widest aid to the Anarcho-Bolshevik groups organized by Alexandrovitch, Roshtchin and Yusia.

In conclusion we were vouchsafed the right to hire a place of our own and to sell literature provided we refrained from criticizing the acts of the Government, in which case we may even be granted recognition.

*The Secretary of the Nikolayev Group.
("Nabat", No. 17, June 2, 1919, Kharkov).*

A CHRONICLE OF THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

Klintzi, province of Chernigov.

The province of Chernigov, and Klintzi in particular, is one of the poorest and economically most backward in Russia.

Klintzi has about a dozen textile (woolen) factories employing about sixteen thousand workers.

Until 1917 the workers of Klintzi had hardly any conception of Anarchism and Anarchists, and until 1918 they were entirely under the influence of some political parties.

But in 1918, with the arrival of two comrades in Klintzi, M. I. and B. D. V., the Revolutionary Union of Anarchists was organized.

The work of the Union consisted in educational and propagandist activities carried on among workers.

The work of the Union was developing at a rapid pace. All the workers of Klintzi sympathized with the Union of Anarchists. But the lack of active workers on one hand and the high cost of living on the other, prevented the organization from publishing literature and a paper.

But since the need of a revolutionary organ in a town like Klintzi

was very great, we exerted our efforts, and in the month of April we issued our paper "The Voice of the Toiler". But, following in the footsteps of the Tzar's police agents, the ruling party (the Bolsheviks) tried to put its hands on the paper.

The publication was closed and the issue confiscated. On the following day, when the workers found out that the Anarchist paper had been closed up, they began to boycott all the Communist meetings; there was an immediate change in the attitude of the workers toward the ruling Party.

Of late, the workers in Chernigov province, and especially in Klintzi, lost a great deal of their faith in political parties.

Instinctively, the workers aim toward independent action and full emancipation from political and economic bondage.

The leaflets and pamphlets published by the Anarchist Union of Klintzi, lost a great deal of their faith in political parties.

were eagerly and enthusiastically taken up by the workers and peasants.

M. IVANCHENOK.

("Nabat", No. 18, June 9, 1919, Kharkov).

POLTAVA. — The "Nabat" organization in Poltava began its legal work immediately after the occupation of Poltava by the Soviet troops. Immediately a club was opened, with a reading room and a library, and literature began to be given out to the population. Talks were given twice a week; mass meetings were also arranged for workers and Red Army men.

Close connections were established with the villages; attempts were made to organize regular distribution of literature among the peasants in reference to pogroms. Our speakers were sent out quite often to the villages, and peasant organizations (Anarchist groups) were formed.

At the General meetings held by the population of the "Volosti" (the lowest administrative unit in the country) our speakers take the floor regularly on topics of current events. The Anarchists exercise considerable influence, and when the authorities realized this, they put their iron hand on the organization, broke it up and arrested some comrades, one of whom is still in prison.

Due to the insistent demand of the workers and the demand for freedom of press and speech, the club was re-opened and the work continued.

YA—A.

("Nabat", No. 18, June 9, 1919, Kharkov).

We received the following excerpt from the minutes of the meeting of the party Committee (Communists) of Lubotinsk in reference to the opening of an Anarchist club (the "Nabat" group).

"Whereas this Anarchist organization is counter-revolutionary and is wholly directed against the Soviet Government; whereas the Soviet Republic is surrounded on all sides by enemies, — it is utterly impossible to grant the enemies of the Soviet government the right of legal existence. Therefore, be it resolved to consider the Anarchist organization as non-existent, to confiscate its seals and make arrests wherever meetings are arranged by Anarchists".

Comment is unnecessary.

(*"Nabat"*, No. 18, June 9, 1919, Kharkov).

REVOLUTIONISTS ARE EXECUTED IN KHARKOV

On June 17, 1919, the Extraordinary Military Tribunal of the City of Kharkov sentenced seven people to be shot: one Anarchist, Mikhayil Pavlenkov, and six peasants of the Gouliay-Polie district: Burbiga, Oleinik, Korobko, Kostin, Polounin, Dobroliubov.

We are horror struck at this sentence! It appears that the old days of the savage hangman, Stolypin, are back with us.

Who were these people that were assassinated by the Bolsheviks? They were the poorest and most hard-pressed peasants, who bore the greatest privations and who from the very first days of the revolution rose against the landowners, fought the counter-revolutionary forces and upheld the rights of the toiling people.

Who are Kostin, Polounin, Dobroliubov (executed peasants), accused by the Bolsheviks of having been engaged in preparatory work for the calling of the "counter-revolutionary" convention of the Soviets in the Gouliay-Polie district?

They belong to the poorest peasants of the very same district, and are nearly illiterate.

What were their crimes?

They accepted their task given them by the Military Section of the Gouliay-Polie Soviet of notifying the peasantry of the Gouliay-Polie district of the call for the regional convention of the Soviet.

Trotsky, in his rancorous attacks against the region controlled by the irregulars, declared this convention of the representatives of poor peasantry as counter-revolutionary, and ordered the seizure and execution of all persons who had anything to do with this convention. His victims were three naive, simple peasants who believed that

they were contributing their small but useful share in rallying their brothers, the poor peasants, for the common cause. And the Bolsheviks of Kharkov, acting on orders from an irresponsible, power-drunk dictator like Trotzky, executed these peasants, and built up around the case of these artless peasants an atmosphere comparable to that as those in the days of the inquisition — of mysterious plots and supra-natural crimes against the state.

Will there not break forth a cry of protest from the Bolshevik ranks themselves against this high-handed action and shedding of blood by the rampant dictators?

And Mikhalev-Pavlenkov! Won't the honest Bolsheviks burn with shame at the outrage committed — the execution of this crystal-pure youth who showed by his heroic life the measure of his great devotion to the cause of the people?

Mikhalev-Pavlenkov was a convinced Anarchist of high integrity who worked in the organization of Petrograd and other cities. Genial, sensitive, of delicate features and a serene, tranquil face, this youth was obviously of the type that would not and could not do violence to anyone.

Mikhalev came to the Gouliay-Polie district as an appointee of the Bolshevik authorities who sent him in his capacity of an engineer to the staff of Makhno's and to take charge of the engineering works of the Division. More than anyone else, he worked to overcome the lack of cohesion in the ranks of the irregulars and to impart to the entire movement revolutionary character.

It is a gross lie and a slander on the part of the Kharkov Military Tribunal to affirm that comrade Mikhalev-Pavlenkov ran away from Gouliay-Polie. Up to the last moment when the White-Guards were already occupying the central part of Gouliay-Polie, Mikhalev held his place with the last unit which was engaged in a rear guard maneuver to cover up the retreat of the rest. He was one of the last to leave the station.

According to the responsible and active workers in the Division, comrade Mikhalev-Pavlenkov spent days and nights fighting at the front. And Voroshilov, who is acting now under the instigation of Trotzky, should be aware of this fact more than anyone else. When Gouliay-Polie was retaken two days later, Mikhalev was one of the first to enter the town. It was Mikhalev who was hailed by the bruised, battered and plundered peasants.

It is when they saw Mikhalev that the peasants cried in joy:

“Thank God! Our people are getting back, Mikhalev is here.”

Shame upon a party that tolerates outrages like the execution of Mikhalev, a party that permits its unprincipled and irresponsible dictators to shed the blood of the genuine sons of the toiling people!

A. SOKOLOV.

(*“Nabat”*, *The organ of the Confederation of the Anarchist Organizations of Ukraine “Nabat”*, No. 22, July 7, 1918).

ONE DAY IN THE CHE-KA'S CELLAR

What follows below is a living and authentic picture portraying one of the most tragic episodes of my revolutionary life. My experiences during the twenty four hours of confinement in the cellar of the Kharkov Che-Ka in the “privileged” cell, that is the cell reserved for those who were sentenced to death, was colored with a deep sense of tragedy. This tragic character was intensified by the circumstance of having all that happen to me on the very day when the military staff of the Makhno army was shot and two days prior to the occupation of Kharkov by Denikin's troops. A lucky accident saved my life on that very day. The energetic intervention of the Southern Bureau of the All-Russian union of Metal Workers, where I was in charge of the Department of Statistics saved me from the clutches of the frenzied Che-Ka, which at that time was killing people like flies. My life was saved due to the efforts of an honest worker, a Communist by the name Sudik, who was at that time a member of the Central Committee of the Metal Workers.

It happened in the following manner. In the spring of 1919 I arrived in Kharkov for the purpose of carrying on work within the Anarchist movement. However, since our movement in the city of Kharkov had been smashed by the Bolshevik authorities, I found employment with the Union of Metal Workers. Soon the military situation became critical; the Red Army was rapidly retreating before the vigorous onslaught of Denikin's troops. The trade unions declared the voluntary mobilization of all people within their ranks holding responsible positions. I was also included into that list of men who were to be assigned for propagandistic work in the army. Since I was an Anarchist, I declared that my propagandistic work would necessarily be of an Anarchist nature. Realizing that this attitude on my part might lead to unpleasant consequences if I were drawn into the army, Sudik decided to leave me out of the list of mobilized responsible workers; but I protested, insisting that I be in-

cluded into the list with two reservations however: 1) that I be sent to the front trenches, 2) and that I be exempt from any punitive and police functions, which at that time were frequently forced upon the army.

Sudik agreed to it and I submitted to the mobilization committee my declaration written in trenchant critical tones. A week following this mobilization, the regiment to which I was assigned was dispatched against the Makhno division. One can easily imagine my inner state when unwittingly I found myself drawn into a punitive expedition against the Makhno fighters. However, the conflict with the latter was settled peacefully before the arrival of our regiment. But the very fact of having been drawn into this intended expedition impelled me to submit a second declaration, this time addressed to the commander of the regiment, in which I stated my resolve to refuse any police duty while I was in the army; that is—suppression of peasant revolts, of workers' strikes, participation in any searches or carrying out of arrests.

This declaration was handed in in the morning, and toward evening I was arrested. On the way to the Che-Ka, I persuaded the guards to take me over to the Anarchist club where I turned over the keys of my room to comrade Abram. I did so because I feared that my room would be searched and that is why I asked comrade Abram to remove a suitcase containing weapons and also officer's insignia which I brought along with me in order to give them to an old friend of mine who had left them with me in 1917 while I was in Petrograd; he had asked me to save them for him as a relic of the years passed at the fronts of the imperialist war. It was about this satchel that I felt uneasy, for to the Bolsheviks those insignias are what a red rag is to a bull. Prove to them under such conditions that I am not a horse and that I am unshoed. . . .

We are at the very end of the corridor leading to the Che-Ka dungeon. The key clanged and I was shoved into a tiny cell. Another clang of the key and life was left at the other side. I stood still at the door, staring in bewilderment.

The cell represented a tiny room with one window, set below the level of the ground and latticed with iron bars. The window opened into a courtyard facing some mysterious barns. Along the wall, stretching from the door to the window, were plank-beds from which four pairs of eyes were staring fixedly at me. One of them belonged to a pain-wracked, huddled figure, fixed in a seated position upon the plank-beds. The sight of it sent a shiver through my body.

Its head rose at my appearance and then sunk back into its former position. The figure was transfixed as it sunk into a state of coma.

Seated near this figure closer to the window were two young men; sturdy and heavy. They jumped off the plank-bed with great alacrity: one could easily tell from their bearing and movements that they were army people. At the other side of the stiffened figure, nearer to the door, a priest was seated; his beard was tousled, and his long disheveled hair was unkempt. The two army people approached me and began firing questions at me .

“Why were you arrested?” one of them asked.

“Because I refused to carry out police duties while in the army, having submitted a written declaration to that effect.”

“Ah. . .” One of them drawled “you’re in a bad fix. . . What are you—Menshevik or Social-Revolutionary?”

“No. I am an Anarchist.”

“An-ar-chist!” . . . He drawled out the word in amazement. “Are you people getting arrested too?”

“It looks that way,” I answered.

“You say,” the second one questioned again, “because you refused. . . Well, then you are a finished man.”

A feeling of hatred at this man welled up within me when I heard him saying that awful thing. But I restrained myself.

“And you?” I asked in turn.

“We? We are also here on charges of a military nature. . . On some suspicion.” The answer was given rather reluctantly. Both broke off the conversation, turning back to the plank-bed.

“And so you believe you will be released soon,” one of them asked again sneeringly, climbing the plank-bed.

“Yes, I do,” I said loudly, but with restrained malice, hardly of course, believing my own words.

“Yes, they will release you. They will release your body from your soul,” one of them said in a quiet voice but with the studied intent of making himself heard. “From here,” he added, this time loudly and a manifest undertone of malice, “only lucky people ever get out.”

I did not answer. Heavy silence enveloped us all. Everyone was sunk in his thoughts. I walked up to the priest. The latter was breathing heavily, while the army people exchanged whispers from time to time. The petrified figure remained in the same position. A feeling of distress was overtaking me. Cheerless thoughts began to

harrow my brain. The idea that I might be executed shook my insides; every cell within my body cried out against a senseless death. The suitcase sticks in my mind, giving an edge to my thoughts of probable execution, as if my act of handing in a declaration in an atmosphere of a Che-Ka panic did not in itself warrant such an expectation. And still this suitcase kept on bothering me; I was going through a state of agony trying to solve this question: did comrade Abram take the suitcase? Did he or did he not. . . He did. . . He did not. . . Of course, he did. . . He promised—and that means that he had carried it out. . . Thus I kept on arguing to myself, finding some momentary peace in this thought. But not for long, for doubts again kept creeping in, intensifying the feeling of uneasiness. Thoughts raced through my mind with the speed of electric sparks. Fatigue began to overcome me. My head swelled up and was burning feverishly; my temples were throbbing violently. . .

We were all silent. . . Darkness fell upon the cell. The sighs of my cellmate became deeper and more distressful. The whispers sink to rarely audible tones.

A sudden light floods the cell. The electric lights were turned on. . . I took a smoke. . .

“Don’t put out your match,” one of the army men asks me.

We all smoke, except the immobile figure. I inquire about the latter.

“The investigator told him,” one of the army men whispered to me—“we are going to shoot you.”

“We are going to shoot you”... That phrase resounded within me. “How?” an inner voice kept clamoring within me; How can they do it? . . . Who gave them the right? People sit there, upstairs and quietly, ruthlessly kill other people. . . Barbarity! . . . It is impossible, it is criminal, just to be able to say simply: “We are going to shoot you.” And the same wretches may tell me the same thing: “We will have you shot. . .” But, how come. . . The train of thoughts break off all of a sudden, and here they follow already a different direction. . . And, perhaps, they won’t even say it: they will just take me out and have me shot without any warning. . . They will take me out ostensibly for a hearing and then . . . bang straight into my neck. And that is the end of me. . . Of course, this is what will happen. . . After all, they can’t leave us with Denikin; and on the other hand, they surely will not take us along. . .” That is followed by another train of thought. “No, it is impossible. . .

They won't, they can't shoot me, they must release me. . . I am not a White-Guardist. I am a revolutionist. . . And who are they, the Bolsheviks? . . . ”

I am going through a state of veritable hell. I fling away one cigarette after another.

The petrified figure of the “doomed” man came to life. Slowly, as if he were seriously ill, the “doomed” man climbed down the plank-bed, knocked at the door, asking to be taken out to the lavatory. He left together with the two army people. Soon they came back. I viewed this man with a certain degree of curiosity. He was a middle aged man, tall, slender; his face was flat and pale. He halted in the middle of the room and addressing his companions, he said seemingly continuing an interrupted conversation: “No, no. . . today I will surely be taken out. . . I was told straight in my face: ‘Confess, you will be shot anyway. . . ’ Now, I’ll have to get my things together. . . There is little time left now. . . Night has fallen already. . . ”

There was a long pause.

“Eh-h-h-h-ch” . . .

No one answered him. Everyone was taken up with his own thoughts. The “doomed” man began to pick up his belongings, tying them up in a bundle. That being done, he took a long look at them and smiled wryly. And then back he went to his plank-bed, back to his huddled, transfixed posture.

“I feel that today the last balance of my life is going to be drawn,” he said forlornly, staring fixedly in the empty space.

No one answered him, not even an echo of his own voice which died away in the cell. It was distressingly painful; death made itself felt. . . My temples began to throb violently; the head was burning; the lids grew heavy. Invisible hammers kept pounding beneath the cranium box. Consciousness was splitting away, everything became as if in a fog. . . A savage cacophony broke loose within me, my thoughts kept whirling frenziedly. I felt an increasing weakness, a growing apathy. My taut nerves began to lose their power to react to internal stimuli:

“I too don't want to die. . . I am young, my life lies ahead of me. . . I did so little in my life. . . To die under the muzzle of an automatic, to be killed by a Che-Ka executionist! . . . No, no. . . And what for? Who will ever learn about my death? And in which way will my death profit anyone? To die for the common

cause, yes—there is nothing terrible about that. But now, to die such a senseless death, of what avail will it be? To fulfil my duty? Ha-ha-h, duty! What sort of duty? . . . The duty of conscience and honor? No, but this. . . ”

The rumbling of an approaching truck broke the silence. It found its painful echo in the hearts of the cell inmates. The “doomed” man started up, and then let his head sink upon his knees.

“Oh, Lord, save us and have mercy upon us,” whispered the priest, crossing himself.

“They are beginning” . . . said one of the army men.

“Beginning, what? who is beginning?”—I asked.

“Lie down and sleep; you will rest the better for it; you won’t be worked up unnecessarily and you will be saved the affliction of many a stinging thought” exhorted the priest.

“But then, what is really starting now?” I kept on asking anxiously.

“Shootings!” was the sharp and spiteful answer. “Many a soul is now trembling with fear and anxiety. . . every one is thinking. . . will they come after me? . . .”

I don’t remember what happened afterwards. Whether I fell asleep or just sank into a state of stupor; I can hardly remember. A violent noise, loud voices, the clanking of the keys, bolts, the squeaking of the doors—all that woke me up. We all jumped up like startled gazelles. . . “Whose turn?” everyone questioned anxiously.

“NN, get your things ready!”

The “doomed” man jumped off hastily, seized the bundle with his belongings and shoved it under his left arm. A deadly pallor spread over his trembling lips which kept on moving as if in prayer. His hands were shaking. Rapidly and keeping turns, he approached everyone of us and stretching out his trembling hand, he said with a peculiar intonation: “Good-by . . . I am taken out to be shot . . . ”

The doors slammed again and a man’s life was blotted out.

“Oh, Lord, remember thy servant in thy kingdom,” uttered the priest.

“Away with the soul wracking and pains,” said one of the army men sighing deeply.

A long silence!

"He is dead by now," said the other army man loudly, seemingly continuing his train of thought.

There was no answer; a deep brooding silence reigned in the cell.

G. MAXIMOFF.

THE HISTORY OF TWO "MISUNDERSTANDINGS." THE SUSPENSION OF THE ANARCHIST PAPER "NABAT" IN ODESSA.

(*A letter from the Odessa Anarchist Federation "Nabat"*).

As is known, the Anarchist Federation "Nabat" had its own publication bearing the same name "Nabat." The history of this paper was frequently marked by all kinds of sad happenings and little "misunderstandings." Here and there difficulties were thrown in by way of stopping the supply of paper for the publication; at other times the issues were confiscated and the circulation of the paper banned, etc. It was quite obvious that the local authorities were conducting a definite, although camouflaged campaign against the Anarchists and their publication. Several times we demanded from them to give us a clear and definite answer as to our relations. That was in vain: the authorities continued their silent campaign.

But on June 16, the seventh issue of the "Nabat" came out: the seventh . . . and the last, for it was the beginning of a long chain of "misunderstandings."

This issue was mainly devoted to the Makhno problem, but the treatment of this problem was of course done in a spirit which was not altogether to the liking of the ruling party.

The appearance of this issue of the "Nabat" produced a veritable state of bewilderment in the ruling spheres. The latter were agitated and perplexed, the rank and file members looked up to the big Moguls awaiting their authoritative word, while the hierarchy was all agog, not knowing what to do.

Especially distasteful to those zealous servants of truth who stand on guard of revolution and the interests of the workers and peasants, was the article under the caption "*Truth About Makhno*," in which a proper evaluation was given to the role of Trotzky in opening up the front to the White Guardist band, betraying the Guliay Polye district and the workers and peasants revolution in Ukraine.

"*The Truth About Makhno*" was not much to the liking of the bigwigs of the Bolshevik party. What? At this moment Trotzky is

charged with betraying the revolution? And Makhno is held up as a revolutionary?

To suspend . . . To confiscate . . . To arrest . . . And so the order is given to suspend and confiscate the publication "Nabat." For greater boldness and self-confidence, and in order to "clear their conscience" so to say, they found it necessary to refer to the resolution of the Ukrainian convention of the Executive Committee of the village Soviets in regard to the liquidation of the Makhno movement and irregular troops. (Of course, this convention was like other conventions of this kind. Anyone who witnessed the so-called peasant conventions staged by the Communist Party knows how resolutions are passed. It is to be added in this connection that the world has not seen an equally shameful performance of that kind. The above mentioned resolution was dictated from above and it was passed just by the mere raising of hands).

About five or six o'clock in the evening, the Club of the Anarchist Federation, the place also where the publication was printed, was surrounded by a detachment of Red Army soldiers. A painstaking search was made but nothing was found, much to the disappointment of the officers in charge of this search. The latter highly incensed, very rudely and angrily declared all the Anarchists present in the Club under arrest. But then this over-zealous servant realized, however, that he was overdoing his zeal and overstepping his power, and in order to remedy the situation he added, in a somewhat milder tone, that all those who do not consider themselves Anarchists may leave. Deep at heart he seemingly entertained the hope that all would take advantage of this offer. However, his expectations did not materialize, since all those who were present expressed their willingness to be arrested.

The arrested comrades were led away to the Che-Ka.

Here they were met by Sieverny himself, the head of the Che-Ka, who apologized for this "misunderstanding" and told the arrested people that they were free.

But the club was not left unmolested. From that time on it began to be frequented by the representatives of the Che-Ka. There were so many of them that it was difficult to determine whether one was in an Anarchist club or in a Socialist police station. There were spies and plain clothes men of all kinds and ranks. There were old detectives, who had seen service in Tzar's times, who knew how to bear themselves; and there were also young, inexperienced

ones who had not yet lost their human dignity. They were pacing about in the club, not knowing what to do, blushing, getting pale in the face. They stopped the Anarchists, asked them questions, concerning Anarchism, and also where Anarchist literature could be obtained. Everyone began showing a sudden interest in Anarchism. All of them became "sympathisers" of the Anarchist movement.

They were going to come more often, but, forsooth, they were so busy. They all kept on asking where is the editorial board, and all gave the same reason for their curiosity: they were eager to contribute an article.

And on the streets . . . there were swarms of them. They kept on coming and going, in and out of the club. They scrutinized every face in the neighborhood as though trying to guess by one's face whether he belonged to the editorial board.

On the following day, at noontime, a truck filled with armed soldiers came rumbling to the building where the "Nabat" was printed. The printing shop was closed up and sealed, everything had been removed and taken away from the shop prior to the closing up. Even the paper in stock was carted away, seemingly, the keeping of paper in stock was viewed by those revolutionary zealots as a manifestation of counter-revolutionary intentions.

"Nabat" was permanently suspended, without having the right to come out under a different title. Our attempts to release another issue illegally was not crowned with success: the fear of the Che-Ka was so great that no printing shop agreed to issue our paper. Even those shops where we published our underground paper for a comparatively small sum during the worst period of the domination of the White-Guardists and the Polish legion, even those places were afraid to print our paper for a much larger compensation. The Che-Ka certainly established its reputation with the people of Odessa, and as a political police agency it made itself more feared than the similar agencies of the White-Guards and the Polish legion.

And so we failed to release the following issue of our "Nabat."

Then we began actively to circulate the "Nabat" published by the Ukrainian Anarchist Confederation and which was sent to us by the Secretariat. But here we met the same fate.

"You were told not to circularize your tales about Makhno. And so you refuse to submit to the orders of the 'Workers' and Peasants' government'! You don't recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat!"

And again on June 10 the Communist Party issued an order about the confiscation of the issue No. 21 of the "Nabat" and the arrest of all those who distribute this Anarchist publication.

The order was soon carried out. And so our club was again surrounded by a squad of red army soldiers and Che-Ka agents.

The latter searched the place with a consummate art. All the locks were broken, all the drawers were opened up, no corner was left unturned; it was a "clean" job, as "clean" as hardly any other police agents in the world could do. And as a reward they found the keys to "counter-revolution." They found the works of Kropotkin, Jean Grave, Malatesta and other old Anarchist revolutionaries.

Everything was carted away and shipped over to the Che-Ka. Even the magazines that had nothing to do with Anarchism, with Socialism and with politics altogether, even those magazines were taken away to the Che-Ka. The arrested comrades were also taken to the same place, where they were kept four and a half hours.

On the way, the arrested "counter-revolutionists" nonpulsed the picked convoy by their behavior. The public was astonished as the arrested group of Anarchists were led through the street with a black Anarchist flag waving above them and revolutionary songs pealing forth; the comrades succeeded in hanging out a black flag, and although the convoy threatened to shoot if the flag was not removed, the "counter-revolutionists" refused to yield, holding high the flag above their heads and singing enthusiastically the revolutionary songs. "We fought with this flag and we shall die with it even under bolshevist reaction and terror."

Four and a half hours later the arrested comrades were released and even extended profuse apologies for this "misunderstanding."

A. KOVALENKO

("Nabat", No. 24, July 15, 1919).

A LETTER FROM KHARKOV

Anarchists imprisoned on the eve of evacuation.

Two days before the city was yielded to the Whites, when it became clear that Denikin's gangs would occupy the city within a very short time—and that in spite of the grandiloquent declarations to the contrary made by the authorities—the "Nabat" made all preparations for underground work. *The last meeting devoted to the task of working out the details for this organization was raided*

by the Che-Ka police who arrested all thirteen comrades present at that meeting.

All the money and things prepared for underground work were confiscated.

On the following day, when the Che-Ka was already "packing up," ready to evacuate the city, leaving the imprisoned comrades at the mercy of the Denikin bands, members of the Anarchist group still at large came to Piatakov and other prominent Bolsheviki with the demand that the imprisoned Anarchists be freed, among whom were a few people well-known to Piatakov and others. It was only when the Cossacks already had come within the precincts of the city that the comrades were released, with the exception of the secretary of the Guliay-Polie group "Nabat," comrade Kabas, whose fate still remains unknown.

Some of the things prepared for underground work and confiscated by the Che-Ka were not returned by the later, which seemingly, was not interested in seeing the Anarchists carry on underground work under Denikin. Notwithstanding the efforts of the evacuated Che-Ka of Kharkov, the work of the Anarchists in organizing their struggle against Denikin is already in full swing: the underground organization is functioning already in Kharkov and the living word of the Anarchist doctrine is being heard again.

(*"Nabat"*, No. 25, July 21, 1919).

MINUTES OF THE SESSIONS OF THE COLLEGIUM (BOARD)
OF THE ALL-UKRAINIAN EXTRAORDINARY
COMMITTEE (CHE-KA)

July 25, 1919

No. 146

Members Present: Latzis, Shishkov, Yakovlev, Apeter, Vitlitzky and Bolitzky. *The latter carried only a consultative vote.*

Secretary — Ivanov.

Case No. 3—Discussed: The case of the Chief of Makhno Staff, citizen Yakov Vasilievich Oserov.

Resolved: To be Shot; verdict to be carried out within twenty-four hours.

Remarks: None.

Chairman: Latzis.

Members of the Board: Apeter, Vitlitzky.

Secretary: Ivanov.

(*"Na Chuzhoy Storonie,"* book IV, Berlin-Praga).

SECRET DEPARTMENT

MINUTES NO. 11 OF THE SESSION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COMMITTEE (CHE-KA) HELD MAY 12, 1919.

Members present: Chariman — Degtiarenko; Secretary — Shub.

Members of the Board: Comrades Grinstein, Savchuk, Schwartzman
and Ugarov.

Order of business: The carrying out of the decision of the Central
Executive Committee about Red Terror.

Discussed

1. The carrying out of the decision of the Central Executive Com-
mittee about Red Terror.
2. The Inner Situation.

Resolved

1. To appoint Lashkevitch as member of the Committee to carry
out Red Terror.
2. Having heard the information given by comrade Degtiarenko, it
was decided not to dissolve the mobilized squads of Party
members until further instructions.

Chairman — Degtiarenko.

Secretary — Shub.

Manager of General Office (*Signature*).

(*"Na Chuzhoy Storonie," book IV, Berlin-Praga*).

THE PERSECUTION OF THE ANARCHISTS IN GREAT RUSSIA

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ANARCHISTS

We received a letter from our comrades in Samara, telling us of the heinous provocation put over by the local Che-Ka in regard to the Anarchist Federation of the city of Samara. The letter contains an excerpt from the local Bolshevik daily "Kommuna" which gives the following information about the closing up of the Anarchist club.

"The Che-Ka of Samara has been getting information to the

effect that under the guise of Anarchists, suspicious elements have been carrying on a definitely counter-revolutionary agitation within the Federation, pitting one section of the population against the other; the ignorant masses against the Red Army, threatening to come out in armed rebellion against the Soviet authorities and the Red Army.

“In view of this fact the club of the Anarchist Federation of Samara was closed and the White-Guardists who ingratiated themselves into the Anarchist ranks were arrested.

“Convinced Anarchists, Anarchists like comrade Rogdayev, motivated by the ideal of Anarchism, were not arrested since they have nothing to do with this provocation.”

In order that the comrades—workers, peasants, and Red Army men—learn about the methods to which the “Communist” politicians revert and also to what extent this above-quoted information can be relied upon, we publish here in full the following report which has come into our possession. The report was written by an agent-provocateur, a stool-pigeon, or in other words, a CheKa agent, Tikhonravov, and directed to the Head of the Secret Department of the Che-ka of Samara.

“To the head of the Secret Department of the Che-Ka of Samara, comrade Bieliayev.” (From the agent of this Department, Tikhonravov).

Report

“Before starting upon the task given me, I spent a short time in acquainting myself with the city.

“Following that I worked myself into the Anarchist Federation, having joined the group of sympathizers. By now, I found out the following:

“1) Alongside of the club a school is functioning bearing the name of ‘Ferrer School’ and numbering 175 pupils.

“2) Lectures are arranged two or three times a week. The lecturer is comrade Rogdayev; topics—‘The History of the Revolutionary Labor Movement’ and ‘The Theory of Anarchism.’

“3) There is also a library and reading room in which Anarchist literature is sold.

“4. The leaders of the Federation are comrades Rogdayev and Sasha (his second name is still unknown to me; he is the Secretary of the Federation). The other members of the Federation frequent the club only in their spare time.

"5) Close contact is maintained with the Maximalists through some sort of a relations committee. The Maximalist literature and their magazine are sold in the club. Both the Anarchists and Maximalists are preparing a joint affair on March 18 in commemoration of the Paris Commune.

"6) The attitude toward the rebellion in the Stavropol county has been formulated by the following resolution: 'Since the rebellion was provoked by the acts of the authorities, the Federation cannot side with the Communist Party in this respect, but taking also into consideration the possibility of this rebellion, like any rebellion at the present moment, being utilized by the counter-revolutionary forces, the Federation declines to support the rebellion in the county of Stavropol.'

"7) On March 10, comrade Kabardin lectured in the club on the topic: 'A World That Lacks Conscience Can Be Led Anywhere.' The talk was very obscure and hardly understood by the audience crowding the hall. Some of the Anarchists sharply assailed the speaker, calling him a Monarchist. Especially emphatic in his denunciation was the Anarchist Golubkov (a member of the Samara Soviet). The speaker declined to answer his opponents, having deferred the discussion to the following Tuesday. His report on that very day was just as obscure as on the previous day, and on the whole it was met with indignation by the audience.

"8) Comrade Kabardin is a member of the Anarchist Federation of Samara. My opinion is that he is not an Anarchist but a drifter, who happened to deliver a talk expressing his purely personal opinions and not that of the Federation."

Signed TIKHONRAVOV.

Commentaries are hardly needed. We shall only add that a declaration by our comrades from Samara saying that Kabardin is not a member of the Federation and is not and has never been an Anarchist. In his talks he assailed the Anarchists as much as the Communists.

The closing of the Samara club and the arrest of its secretary, an old and devoted revolutionist, is caused by the mere fact that the club became a tribune of free speech, where the truth could be heard and where the acts of the authorities could be exposed from the point of view of revolutionary labor.

The Che-Ka is making work for itself: the club of the Samara

Anarchists had been literally flooded with stool-pigeons. The comrades knew about it, but still they kept speaking their mind openly just as Anarchists do anywhere else.

The entire educational work of the comrades in Samara was wiped out by the zealous efforts of the local finks. But the comrades do not lose faith and hope. For they firmly believe that the growth of the Anarchist movement cannot be checked permanently, that the day will come when the workers and peasants will have proclaimed their firm proletarian will and their solidarity with the ideal of the *Free Anarchist Commune*.

(*"Nabat"*, *Organ of Confederation of Anarchist Organizations of Ukraine "Nabat"*, May 5, 1919).

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*

Comrade Nikolay Gordeyev was arrested in Izhevsk for having delivered a speech at the meeting held on the anniversary of the February revolution. During the Kolchak offensive he was shipped over to Sarapoul and from there to Kazan, where he is still kept in prison.

(*"Nabat"*, No. 18, July 9, 1919).

THE PERSECUTION OF ANARCHISTS THE ANARCHISTS BLACK CROSS

(*An appeal sent to the foreign delegates to the Second Congress of the Third International*).

Comrades:

The prisons and other detention houses of R. S. F. S. R. contain a great number of Anarchist comrades and revolutionaries of various tendencies.

Since we do not want to place ourselves in an ambiguous position by attending your congress, we ask you to voice our demands to release our comrades from all prisons and confinement places.

Not having a delegate at your congress, we, therefore, are compelled to ask you to help us in this matter.

PRAVDA, GOLUBEVA, N. KHRAMOVA

For the Uffim Federation—SONTZEV

The representative of the Black Cross of the Union of Anarchist Workers

Secretary—PAVLOV.

1920

**DOCUMENTS FROM THE ARCHIVE OF THE
PROVISIONAL EXECUTIVE BUREAU OF THE
ALL-RUSSIAN CONFEDERATION OF
ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS.**

**ATTITUDE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY, OF THE
COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND OF THE RED TRADE
UNION INTERNATIONAL TOWARDS ANARCHISTS
AND SYNDICALISTS *)**

EXPLANATIONS.

. . . A number of active workers in the Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist movement abroad came in 1920 to Moscow for the Congress of the Communist International: Comrade Souchy, delegate of the F. A. U. D. (German Syndicalists); A. Borghi, delegate of the Italian Syndical Union; A. Pestana, delegate of the Spanish Confederation of Labor; Lepetit (who perished on his way back) from France, and others.

The Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists held conferences with the foreign comrades and showed them quite clearly what the general situation in Russia was like, and, in particular, gave them an insight of the situation in which the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists found themselves. As a result of these interviews and of the mutual information, the Provisional Executive Bureau of the Russian Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists transmitted to the delegates—in its name—two appeals to the world proletariat. One of these appeals referred to the war with Poland: in it, the proletariat abroad was invited to do its utmost to help Revolutionary Russia, at the same time warning it not to imitate the Russian example, not to follow the Bolshevists in their methods of making the Revolution.

Characteristic detail: the appeal was photographed and published in the "Libertaire" of Jan. 7-14, 1921, No. 103. (See also No. 3 of April 8, 1921 of "L'Antorcha," Buenos Aires).

*) Those explanations were published in the book: "Letters From Russian Prisoners", pp. 249-252.

The other document, a more elaborate one, and which contained information upon the situation in Russia, calling upon all to protest against Bolshevik persecutions and against the shooting of Anarchists and other revolutionists, never reached Europe for reasons unknown (perhaps because of the strict Bolshevik censorship).

The persecution of Anarchists increased after the departure of the delegates. This compelled the Bureau to send a protest to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party against the tactics of the Party which was bent on the extermination of the Anarchist movement, pushing it underground to an illegal life.

We had also decided to obtain P. Kropotkin's signature under that protest. In a conversation I had with him, P. Kropotkin, categorically refused to put his signature to that protest, and advised us not to protest before the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. "*It would be ridiculous,*" he said, "*to address a protest to the headquarters of the gendarmerie.*" . . .

As a result of the refusal of Kropotkin to join in our protest, the Executive Bureau reconsidered the question and it was decided to send a statement to the Communist International only, informing it of what was happening. This was found necessary, according to the Bureau, because of the persecutions becoming more and more widespread and brutal; it was, besides, urgent to destroy the pro-Bolshevik illusions of the foreign comrades who, owing to erroneous and insufficient information, were handing over the libertarian movement to the mercy of the Russian Communist Party.

The Executive Bureau considered that these illusions could best be done away with by a protest addressed to the Communist International, hoping that it might perhaps compel the Russian Communist Party to put a damper on its persecution of Anarchists and give the latter the right to conduct legally their propaganda. Both of these solutions were desirable. The Communist International would have been unable to act otherwise, as the protest was being addressed directly to it in which it was asked to put a stop to the Russian Communist Party's terror against Anarchists, and to render the position of Russian Anarchists equal to that settled toward foreign Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists with whom that Party was undoubtedly flirting.

As much as an affirmative answer would be disadvantageous to the Russian Communist Party, a negative one would be undesirable and harmful to the Communist International. The Executive

Bureau would not have hesitated to circulate widely that reply: it would have unmasked the Communist International in the eyes of foreign Anarchists, and especially of Anarcho-Syndicalists whom Bolsheviks dared not neglect. This they were well aware of. At least it was our impression, during our interview with Rosmer,*) to whom we handed a French text of our protest with a covering letter addressed to him personally in which we asked him to submit our statement to the Executive of the Communist International.

The statement and the letter were handed personally by the author of this article and by Yartchuk to Rosmer in the presence of the Dutch delegate Jansen (member of the Executive).

At this first interview, carried on in English, a great deal of time was taken up owing to Rosmer's desire to obtain ample and detailed information on the relations between Communists and Anarchists, on the role of the latter during the Revolution, and on their point of view on the current situation. Rosmer was friendly and promised to examine our statement, and let us have an early reply as to his readiness to submit it to the consideration of the Executive of the Communist International.

The second interview also took place at Rosmer's: this time A. Shapiro was present on our behalf as translator. Rosmer agreed to place our statement before the Communist International, but under one condition: that we would redraft it, eliminate the polemical tone and the attacks against the Russian Communist Party, and omit a few expressions injurious to the Communist International.

After a short discussion, we agreed that we would follow his advice.

Shortly after this conversation, numerous arrests took place in Kharkov. The entire Anarchist movement of the Ukraine, known under the name of "Nabat" ("Alarm") was wrecked. Among the hundreds of arrested comrades were two or three dozen of our best workers: A. Baron, Dolenko-Checkeress (who has since joined the Communist Party), Yartchuk (delegate of the Executive Bureau to the Congress which was to have taken place), Mark, B. Stoyanoff, Volin, and others.

Yartchuk being in prison, I was the only delegate of the Executive Bureau at the third interview with Rosmer at which A. Shapiro

*) French Syndicalist connected with the Third International in Moscow.

was again present in the capacity of translator. Janson was again present.

The manifesto which I had drawn up (and the text of which I give below) seemed to Rosmer even stronger than the first one. This was natural, as I had written it under the influence of the Kharkov pogrom, from which I escaped by a mere accident. Rosmer flatly refused to submit the statement to the Executive. I was obliged to consent, on behalf of the Executive Bureau, to the alterations demanded with regard to the form as well as the text of the statement.

The third and final text of the manifesto, transmitted to Rosmer by A. Shapiro after the latter, together with other members of the "Golos Trouda"*) group, and myself, had redrafted it, differs from the text published below by the absence of polemical outbursts, and also in that no time-limit was given to the Communist International during which its reply was to be sent; the period thus fixed during which no reply might be forthcoming was not to have been taken as a reply in the negative. A few days later, Rosmer notified us that the statement was handed over, and that it would be examined. One month later, Rosmer again notified us that the statement had been considered but that, in the absence of a quorum, without which no definite decision would be arrived at, the question was referred to the forthcoming session of the Executive Committee of the Communist International; a delegate of the organization which had drafted the Manifesto would be invited to attend the session.

In the meantime, things turned out quite differently. A month later (March 8, 1921), the Russian Communist Party replied in lieu of the Communist International: Yartchuk (recently released from prison) and myself, were arrested.

A collective hunger-strike in the Taganka prison (Moscow), during which 13 Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists refused food for 10 days, compelled the Russian Communist Party to deport us abroad. This measure, used at that time for the first time. It received the assent of the Communist International. Nay, the latter passed from the defensive to the offensive and published a libelous diatribe of Mr. Yakovlev entitled: "The Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists Before The Tribunal Of The World Proletariat." This pamphlet was distributed by the Communist International in different countries.

That was the answer to our statement.

*) "Voice of Labor".

The same attitude has also been adopted by the Red Trade Union International. The last sitting of that International's Congress closed, thanks to the eleventh hour intervention of Bukharin, who reduced the entire Anarchist movement of Russia to the "Makhnovshtshina" and to the rejoinder of Sirolle, with a scandalous uproar. The Russian Federation of Trade Unions took sides for the Communist International. This is its declaration:

"We declare hereby that some of the prominent individuals had taken an active part in the Makhnovist movement*) and had occupied important posts in these bands. We possess all the necessary documents and Comrade Sirolle was cognizant of them. Some other groupings were intimately related to the counter-revolutionary "Makhnovshtshina",**) as well as to the Kronstadt rebels."

. . . I publish here the text of the second statement, because the third, which differs little from this one, is in the hands of the *Vecheka*. When arrested, my correspondence and the Archives of the Provisional Executive Bureau of The All-Russian Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists were taken away—never to be returned. The original text is in the possession of the Communist International.

G. MAXIMOFF.

APPEAL OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CONFEDERATION OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS

TO THE WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES

Comrades: The four years of imperialist war and three years of civil war have reduced our country to a state of utter ruin.

The civil war, which led to the exhaustion of the revolutionary forces of Russia, is the work not only of the inner counter-revolution or of the Russian bourgeoisie; the greatest guilt is borne by the infamous governments of the Entente who did not overlook the slightest opportunity to crush our revolution.

The Entente attacked us directly and indirectly and still continues attacking us; it captured the north of Russia; it openly supported the Czecho-Slovakian Legions in Siberia; it aided Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenich; it incited against us all the small neighboring states and through its infamous blockade it holds the country in the grip

*) Comrades Volin, Mark and a few others are here alluded to.

**) Followers of Makhno, leader of Ukrainian peasants.

of hunger and starvation. But all its attempts have failed to break the resistance of the revolutionary proletariat. And still the powerful Entente, the rulers of the world, does not lay down its arms, does not lose hope of crushing our revolution and re-establish its decaying democracy. It is helping the general of the old Russian Empire, Baron Wrangel, to rally his counter-revolutionary forces, it hurls Poland against us, it incites Rumania, Hungary and other countries. And it continues providing all the enemies of revolutionary Russia with expert advisers, armaments and money.

Comrades: our heroic people has been weakened by this struggle and is perishing now from hunger, and lack of medical supplies. It aspires toward peace, it wants to be given a chance to rebuild its economic life. For this it needs your help, the aid of your revolutionary energies. Help it immediately, without any delay!

We, Anarcho-Syndicalists of Russia, notwithstanding the persecutions which we suffer from the socialist government, notwithstanding our complete disagreement with the party in power, notwithstanding our rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and party dictatorship especially, a dictatorship which has been one of the large factors in causing economic chaos and the demoralization of the political life of the country, notwithstanding all that—we send you an ardent appeal to support Russia in its struggle against the world bourgeoisie.

Comrades: we ask you to fulfil your duty in regard to us, the duty of universal proletarian solidarity. Put an end to the domination of your bourgeoisie just as we did here. *But do not repeat our mistakes: don't let state communism be established in your countries.*

Come to our aid! Prevent trains with munitions from leaving for the Russian territory held by counter-revolutionists. Destroy such trains. Stop production of armaments and ammunitions. Force the governments to establish commercial relations with us; to send to us machines, medical supplies, food and clothing. But the greatest and most effective help you can extend to us now is to make the revolution in your countries.

Your help is urgently needed. Long live the World Social Revolution! Long live the world solidarity of the proletariat! Down with the bourgeoisie and the State, the proletarian State included! Long live the social order of communism-syndicalism; Anarcho-Syndicalism will lead to the Anarchist Commune and will do away with all forms of dictatorship.

Long live the Workers' and Anarchist International.

Forward! The spirit of free communism is hovering all over the world.

The Provisional Bureau of the All-Russian Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists

G. MAXIMOFF, E. YARCHUK, S. MARCUS.

ALL-RUSSIAN CONFEDERATION OF
ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS
THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU

TO THE CENTRAL
COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

We received a number of reports from our local organizations about the persecution carried on with the connivance of the local committees of the Communist Party, of the arrests of our comrades and groups, of the seizure during the searches of legally authorized literature, etc.

According to this information, during a very short interval of time the following facts were noted in the following towns and cities.

1. *Malaya Vishera.* Three comrades were arrested for no cause. The arrested comrades spent twenty three days in the house of detention and were released without having been presented with any charges; incidentally, these comrades are known to the local authorities as workers in the field of popular education. During the search, the legally authorized literature found in possession of these comrades was seized and sent to the Novgorod Che-Ka.

2. *Ekaterinburg.* Comrades Kovalchuk and "Abram," employees of the Provincial Section of the State Publishing department, were arrested for propagandistic work and are still kept in prison.

3. *Klintzi.* One comrade was arrested and put in prison for having in his possession the circular letter, No. 1, of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists. The address found on him was followed up by searches and arrests undertaken in connection with the very same letter.

4. *Tula.* Here the secretary of the local Executive Committee of the Communist Party, when asked by our comrades for permission to open a club, answered in the following words, expressing therewith the official opinion of the Executive Committee itself: "We

have only two parties now: the Communists and their enemies. Against the other parties and against you we wage an energetic struggle and we will not have any scruples, not only in dispatching you to the local Che-Ka, but also in putting you against the wall."

5. *Rostov on the Don*. The club was broken up and literature sealed up.

6. *Moscow*. The entire audience of fifty-five people who were present at a lecture in the club on the Bolshoi Chernishevsky Lane were arrested on October 24, 1920. The lecturer, V. Volin was also arrested. A search was also made in the office of the Secretary of the Executive Bureau of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists, where manuscripts and documents were seized and the Secretary arrested. Rude treatment characterized the whole procedure. The police agents attempted to search the women in person. The grilling dragged out unusually long and the arrested declared a hunger strike in sign of protest. Some of them, like Goldenberg, were on this strike for 11 days.

In the same month, in the railroad station, comrades Frenkel and Tankov from Kiev were arrested, their crime being that they had in their baggage legally published Anarchist literature which they bought in Moscow. They were kept in prison for two weeks.

7. *Kharkov*. Pursuant to one of the provisions of the political pact drawn up between Makhno and the Soviet power, the Anarchists were given the right to conduct without interference oral and written propaganda. On the basis of such a provision the Kharkov comrades began to publish a paper "Nabat" (the Alarm), held lectures and symposiums in the club. A peaceful Anarchist propaganda was started. An open, legal convention was set for the first of December. No one contemplated an armed struggle against the Soviet Government.

Suddenly, on the night of November 25, events took place which cannot be justified on any grounds whatsoever. The Soviet Government decided to liquidate Makhno. But what had the Anarchists to do with it since the latter definitely stated that Makhno and the Anarchist movement were not one and the same thing? However, the blow was directed at the Anarchists. The club was surrounded, all those who were present, Anarchists and non-Anarchists, were arrested, the place was ambushed and all newcomers were seized; such methods as luring passerbys into the club under various pretexts was also used.

The book store "Free Brotherhood" was broken up. Comrades were rounded up in their apartments. More than three hundred people were picked up in the police drag net.

And then began the hounding of the delegates who were coming to the convention. On December 2, on the railway station, Yartchuk was arrested, the comrade was Treasurer of the Executive Bureau of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists; on the same day Comrade Stoyanov, from Petrograd, was arrested in the office of the Southern Paper Trust and on December 4, Drikker, from Kiev, was arrested on the street. On the train, on the way from Romni to Kharkov, were arrested the old Anarcho-Syndicalists Dolenko-Chekeres and Elizaveta Tinovitzkaya with her two children—one, eight and the other two years of age.

Up to now forty-four people, our best comrades, have been brought to Moscow as prisoners; they are kept under the dismal conditions prevailing in the prisons of the Special Department of the All-Russian Che-Ka. Their detention in Moscow is kept secret; rumors are spread by Brenner, the Deputy of the All-Russian Che-Ka, and Benedict Rizkin, the investigator that they had been sent to Tobolsk.

And, incidentally, among the arrested are three mothers with small children, a woman in the seventh month of pregnancy, and other women who spit blood. Nevertheless, no one is permitted to see the prisoners or to send them food; the children are not let out of prison and all the prisoners are kept on starvation rations, almost on a dungeon regime. No explanations about their arrests have yet been given out.

One can adduce a great number of other facts, but we will confine ourselves to those cited above.

The Executive Bureau of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists brings these facts to your attention and protests in the most energetic manner against their outrageous character; we emphatically protest against the denial of this most elementary principles of the international revolutionary-proletarian solidarity; this in general and those of the Comintern in particular.

Being firmly convinced that in these cases we have to do merely with arbitrary acts of the local representatives of the Soviet Government and local Party Committees, who failed to grasp adequately the spirit of the Soviet Constitution and the general line of behavior of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Com-

munist International, the Executive Bureau of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists expects that the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party will come out with resolute and categorical explanations about these lamentable facts from which we could obtain an answer: clear, precise and precluding any misconstructions, to the question: *What is your attitude to the Anarchists and their work within the confines of the Soviet Republics?*

On the other hand, we find it our duty to demand most categorically the immediate release of all the Anarchists arrested and confined to prison for political crimes, that is, for being a part of the Anarchist movement and for carrying on Anarchist work as it was and is in the events of the cases cited above, as well as many others that have not yet come to our attention.

G. MAXIMOFF
S. MARCUS.

THE EXECUTIVE BUREAU
of the
ALL-RUSSIAN CONFEDERATION OF
ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS (Seal)
DEC. 15, 1920
No. 63
Address:
Tel. No.

TO THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE OF THE THIRD
INTERNATIONAL

A DECLARATION

Comrades:

The first and second Congresses of the Communist International adopted the point of view that its ranks should be made up not only of Communists, but that they should also include the entire left wing of the international revolutionary labor movement: Anarchists, Syndicalists, I. W. W's, etc.; the Comintern found it not only feasible but also urgently necessary to work with these elements in closest contact, shoulder to shoulder, notwithstanding the outstanding differences in basic views existing between the Communists and the lefts, that is the Anarchists.

Apart from the general tactical line adopted by the Second Congress on this question, the same is further attested by a number of official documents issued by the Comintern, such as: "The appeal of the Executive Committee of the Comintern to the Industrial Workers of the World" ("Comintern," No. 9, January, 1920); "Toward the Second Congress of the Communist International" (Ibid, No. 11); "The theses on the basic tasks of the Second Congress of the Comintern" (ibid, No. 12); Zinoviev's official speech at the Fifth All-Russian Conference of Trade Unions; the fact that A. Borghi with the "Unione Syndicale Italiana" and also Pestana with the Spanish C. N. T. (General Confederation of Labor) were accepted as members of the Comintern.

It is known to you that this line of friendly collaboration with the left elements adopted by the Comintern is being carried out in various degrees in regard to our comrades, the Anarcho-Syndicalists of Spain, Italy, Germany, Scandinavia, France, England, America and Australia. The Comintern renders substantial aid in their struggle for a free society, that is, for Anarchy.

It seems then that the same line of behavior should also be carried out in relation to the Anarcho-Syndicalists of Russia, the more so, because the program and tactics of the latter coincide with the program and tactics of the Anarcho-Syndicalists of Western Europe. It would seem that all the resolutions of the Comintern touching the Anarchists and Syndicalists of Western Europe should be valid for Russia also. However, the practice shows us something different: the resolutions adopted by the Comintern on that question are not carried out in Russia; here Anarchists and Syndicalists are being persecuted. The Russian Communist Party, a member of the Comintern, pursues undeviatingly its terroristic tactics. The position in which the Russian Anarchists have been placed is incompatible with the honor of the Comintern and cannot be tolerated any longer.

Let us, for instance, take as an illustration: the occurrence which took place October 24 this year.

Is it possible that in this Socialist Republic the Communist Party, which is the leading member of the Comintern, should make raids, through its police organ, the Extraordinary Commission (Che-Ka), upon Anarchist and non-anarchists, and give the Che-Ka's soldiers the license to undertake the searching of the women?

Is it possible, is it admissible that in the absence of the owner

of the premises, without showing any search warrant, that police agents should be permitted to break into headquarters, conduct a search, without even going through the trouble of making a record thereof and in addition, to arrest people without any justifiable grounds? This happened, on the day already referred to, to the Secretary of the Executive Bureau of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists.

Is it compatible with the honor and dignity of the Comintern and the Russian Communist Party, the most prominent member of the former, to arrest wholesale all those that are present at a legally authorized meeting and, without preferring any charges against them, to throw them into the damp dungeons of the Che-Ka, to treat them roughly, to keep them on a starvation regime and to ignore completely their lawful demand to squash their case within twenty-four hours?

Is it not shameful to bring all the arrested Anarchists to a point where they were forced to declare a hunger strike? And that did take place; the arrested comrades refused food, their hunger strike lasted three days and some, like Goldberg, kept it up for eleven days.

Comrades: These unheard of happenings have become part and parcel of daily life; they do not even arouse indignation any more, for under conditions of the absolute sway of the club-law under which we live now, the feeling of human dignity has become atrophied. Like a pack of animals, the citizens of the Socialist Republic bear patiently their cross.

The above mentioned occurrences took place in Moscow. And what is taking place in the provinces? There, terror and nightmare conditions have full sway. This is quite natural, no other course being possible under a party dictatorship.

Freedom does not exist in Russia; not even for Communists. Free press is absent. Papers and publications are closed up; they are persecuted in the fiercest and most senseless fashion.

There is no such a thing as freedom of speech: meetings, rallies are forbidden fruit to us. We have the right to call ourselves Anarchists, to work in Soviet institutions, but to carry on propaganda, to spread our ideas, that is, to be active and not to become mere talking machines, a mere inventory item in the general economy—that is not granted to us. Moreover, in some provinces, in the Ural region for instance, Anarchists are arrested just for belonging to

the movement. It is clear that under such conditions the freedom to publish books is non-existent; in this respect all kinds of obstacles are made, going as far as banning the publication of the works of Bakunin, Kropotkin and Pelloutier.

But what took place in Kharkov is the most monstrous occurrence of all!

It is, perhaps, known to you that in Ukraine there is in existence an army of irregular peasant troops, named after its leader—an old Anarchist, Makhno—the “Makhnovites.” And you may also know that while Makhno was treacherously beaten by the Bolsheviks on several occasions, he always came to the aid of the Soviet Government at the most critical moments, hitting out at the common enemy—Petliura, Denikin, Wrangel. It was due to his aid that the Red Army succeeded in wiping out the Southern counter-revolution.

Wrangel's rapid advance in Ukraine impelled Makhno to cease his struggle against the Soviet Government and to offer it his aid. The offer was accepted and a pact was drawn up between both Makhno and the Soviet Government, and duly signed by both sides. According to this pact, the Soviet Government undertook to free all the Anarchists arrested on the territory of the Soviet Republics. This provision of the agreement was not fulfilled; just the reverse, the persecutions, as shown by the events of October 24, have taken on greater sweep. According to that pact, Anarchists obtained the right freely to engage in written and oral prapaganda. This condition was fulfilled only in Kharkov where the Anarchists began to publish their paper “Nabat” (the “Alarm”).

But Wrangel was defeated and there was no need any longer for Makhno. It was decided to get rid of him, to put an end to the “Makhno” movement and simultaneously, to the Anarchists in Kharkov.

Apart from the 360 people seized in the Anarchist club, a number of comrades were arrested outside of the latter.

The hounding of Anarchists still continues. A legally authorized Anarchist convention was to take place in Kharkov. Those comrades who came to that convention were arrested as soon as they came to the city. Among the arrested comrades was a member of the Executive Bureau of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists, Comrade Yartchuk, who was detained at the Kharkov Railway station; Comrade Dolenko-Chekeres who was arrested with his wife and two children (one was eight and the other two years

old). Among those who are kept in prison are women in the seventh month of pregnancy.

Anarchist publishing houses have been closed up, all books have been confiscated. The Central Administration of the Ukrainian Che-Ka publishes its official declaration ("Communist" 2—1920, declaration No. 279) under the title "Makhno's Treason," in which it tries to justify its behavior by an alleged discovery of a plot against the Soviet Government, but perusal of this document leaves no doubt that we are dealing with pure fabrication.

Such are the facts. . . .

Avoiding all polemics, and trying to throw light upon the situation from an objective angle, the Executive Bureau of the Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists pose before you the following questions:

1. What is the attitude of the Comintern toward the Russian Anarchists and Syndicalists?

2. Is the Comintern of the opinion that the resolutions and the tactical line adopted in relation to the Anarchists and Syndicalists of Western Europe are also valid in regard to the Anarchists and Syndicalists of Russia, Ukraine and other Soviet Republics?

3. What does the Comintern intend to do in order to put an end to the persecutions of Anarchists and Syndicalists by the Communist Party of Russia and Ukraine who by pursuing their terroristic policy, compromise the Comintern in the eyes of the proletariat of Western Europe?

The Confederation of Russian Anarcho-Syndicalists hopes that within one month the Executive Committee of the Comintern will give a definite answer to all these questions.

If such an answer does not come forth within one month, the Confederation will be compelled to assume that the Comintern is quite in agreement with the policies of the Russian Communist Party.

With fraternal greetings

*The Executive Bureau of the All-Russian
Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists.*

(Seal)

G. MAXIMOFF
S. MARCUS.

1921

THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS GROUPINGS

ON THE ANARCHISTS

*(A circular letter sent out by the Central Committee of the
Russian Communist Party)*

Now that the hopes of the imperialists to smash Soviet Russia by external force collapsed, the efforts of the counter-revolutionary organizations have turned to working within the country.

Heading this movement directed toward the organization of a rebellion within the country is the party of Social-Revolutionists which, although formally declaring its rejection of any coalition with the bourgeoisie parties, had in fact entered into a new bloc with the latter at the Paris conference of the members of the Constituent Assembly. A number of documents, such as Savinkov's letter, circulars issued by the Central Committee of the Social-Revolutionary Party, center their attention upon the organization of Peasant Unions on one hand, and the counter-revolutionary work in the army on the other. But even prior to the Paris conference, the Central Committee of the Social-Revolutionary Party pointed out in its circular letter, dealing with the organization of Peasant unions, the possibility of uniting not only with the Left Social-Revolutionists and other kindred organizations, but also with Anarchists of various shades of opinions. The unusual weariness now taking hold of the masses of population, the burden of forced grain deliveries, of forced labor and compulsory transport duties now imposed upon the peasantry, the break-down of national production, the weariness of the working masses, the impossibility to carry out rapidly the demobilization of the army, the fact that a considerable number of peasant households belonging to the demobilized Red-Army soldiers have been destroyed during the civil war—all that creates the ground for an anti-soviet counter-revolutionary agitation.

The discussion on trade unions began toward the end of 1920,

the exacerbated polemics waged by some groups within the party, the Anarcho-Syndicalist deviation (now condemned by the tenth convention of the Party) all, added fuel to the work of our adversaries. A number of isolated strikes and peasant outbreaks were organized with the active participation of the right and left Social-Revolutionists on one hand, and on the other, of the Anarchists who hardly drew a line of separation, if they did draw any at all, between themselves and the right Social-Revolutionists.

The events in Kronstadt soon convinced us even more clearly that any declaration made by the Anarchists about their readiness to fight against any attempt to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat is a hollow promise. During the Kronstadt rebellion there was not a single Anarchist group in Russia, that is with the exception of the numerically small group of "Anarchists-Universalists-Intra-Individualists," that came out, even verbally, against the rebels. Just the opposite: the slogans of the Kronstadt rebellion were seized upon by all kinds of Anarchists. The Anarchists reprinted and circulated the Kronstadt resolutions, they were even partly instrumental in the acceptance of those resolutions; they practically adopted as their own the cause of the Kronstadt rebels, which in the long run was the cause of the French Stock Exchange. It was in the days of the Kronstadt rebellion that the Moscow Anarchists of various organizations made an attempt to set up an "Anarchist Council of Action," and they were working out the program of such a Council which, according to their plan, was to play a decisive role in the development of the so-called Third Revolution, that is, the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the factories, the Anarchists worked hand in hand with the Social-Revolutionists and others, arousing the discontent of workers.

These and many other facts compel the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to turn its serious attention upon the activity of the Anarchist groups in Russia.

Until now the attitude of the Soviet Government to the various Anarchist groups was one of tolerance. The organizations existed almost legally, in some places even Anarchist clubs were permitted to carry on their work, the Anarchists published their periodic press and their book stores functioned normally.

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The Anarchists in Russia are divided into several groups of which the most influential were:

1. *The All-Russian Federation of Anarchist-Communists.* This Federation was at one time represented in the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviets. It still has its legal organ "Free Labor" and its own publishing house. It is headed by the old, very respected Anarchist-Communist, A. Karelin.

Officially this group does not act together with the counter-revolutionary organizations, but is nevertheless used by the left and right Social-Revolutionists. It is used so widely, indeed, that according to Karelin himself, the Federation cannot vouch for all those who have membership cards in it. Such membership cards camouflage quite a number of active right and left Social-Revolutionists, since these tickets are given out to anyone who declares himself in sympathy with the ideas of this organization. This method of recruiting was responsible for such facts, for instance, as the joining of this organization (in the city of Novgorod) by entire gangs of criminals.

2. *A. Karelin* is at the same time the Secretary of another organization — *the All-Russian Federation of Anarchists.* This Federation was conceived as an attempt to rally the scattered groups of Anarchists. In Moscow it had its club on the Leontyevsky alley. In that club lectures were held of the most counter-revolutionary nature. For instance, the idea is being elaborated that now the moment has come for the Anarchists to act through the medium of agitation and actual fighting. Like the Federation itself, the club was a refuge for all those who wanted to find shelter under the diffuse "organization" of this Federation, which did not oblige any one to anything. That is why the Soviet government found it necessary to liquidate this club.

3. *The All-Russian Section of Anarchist-Universalists.* This group was organized in the summer of 1920 at the Moscow Anarchist convention, represented by Anarchists of various groupings. It split off from the majority of the convention and formulated its basic thesis in which they rejected the disorganizing methods of struggle, rebelliousness for its own sake, terror and expropriation for private purposes, and recognizing only the expropriation of expropriators undertaken on a world scale. The group recognizes "workers' parliamentarism" as represented by the Soviet government, it finds necessary to participate in the work of the Soviet apparatus, to uphold the Red Army, the civil war and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the transitional form toward Anarchy. It

recommends a study of the Soviet regime which is basically right, although demanding some corrections in parts.

But even in this group, as soon as the peasant movement and the Kronstadt rebellion broke out, those elements came to prevail which took exception to the above referred point of view and which began to take part in the preparatory work of organizing an Anarchist Council of Action. This element viewed the open declaration of its group as an unworthy compromise with the Soviet government. That is why this new dominant element expelled those who upheld the basic tenets of this group, the majority of whom shifted in the direction of an active Anarchism-Communism of the above described orientation. The majority of this group got busy issuing and circulating leaflets of the following kind: "Where there is authority, freedom is wanting"; "Freedom is not given, it is taken"; "Who wants to shed the blood of our brothers?"; "The Call to Comrades, Workers, Sailors, Red-Army Men and Peasants", was issued in connection with the Kronstadt events and was replete with appeals for the support of the Kronstadt sailors.

The behavior of this group, one of the most peaceful in the Anarchist movement, shows how little reliance can be placed upon Anarchists as allies in a period of shifts, vacillations and political changes.

4. Among all these groupings, the one deserving the greatest attention is *the All-Russian Confederation of the Anarcho-Syndicalists*.

Numerically it is a small group and until lately its work was mainly of a preparatory organizational character. This group issued a number of circulars about the work in the Red Army. It is recommended in these circulars to conduct an energetic but a discreet organizational propaganda in the Red Army, and also to organize cells in every military unit: — openly or under cover as determined by conditions. An attempt is made to prove in those circulars that the Red Army as such cannot vanquish the enemy. Working thus toward the disintegration of the Red Army, it recommends to its members to seize the educational and cultural apparatus of the Red Army, to utilize them for propaganda and circulation of Anarchist literature, to take an active part in the struggle of the Red Army soldiers for their daily interests, to wage a struggle for the betterment of conditions of the soldiers' life, and to avail themselves of any occasion for propaganda. The Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation also recommends the capturing of the Sections of People's education and cultural societies as such. Such attempts have actually

been made in some provinces (Perm province, for instance). The chief attention of the members is drawn toward the task of capturing the sections of Adult Education (University Extension, etc.) and especially the instructors' section, in order to make use of the traveling instructors for the purposes of developing and interlinking the organization on a vast national scale. The Anarcho-Syndicalist group also draws the attention of its members to the work among youth, and here the experience of the last period points out that the Communist youth, especially in Ukraine, very often becomes the center upon which the efforts of the Anarcho-Syndicalists are directed. The differences of opinion which lately appeared within the organization of the Russian Communist youth has been brought about to a considerable extent by the penetration of the Anarcho-Syndicalist elements within its ranks.

The Anarcho-Syndicalist group points out directly that "we should pay serious attention to the work within the Communist youth organization; not to overlook this organization in our work, for the last convention has revealed the presence of anarchistically inclined elements; it is necessary to get nearer to this organization." Among the ideas circulated among the student youth by the Anarcho-Syndicalists we must single out for special attention the idea of separation of school from the State. Their work in this field has already brought about definite results in the form of local unions (Pskov, Ufa and others). This work takes the form of a Party opposition closely resembling in its character the erstwhile group of "Workers' opposition" within the Russian Communist Party.

The Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation also helps the right Social-Revolutionists in the organization of a non-partisan Peasant Union.

In this work they recommend to "seek help among the teaching personnel, to show great caution and to be sparing of words." And then the Confederation appealed to all organizations, calling upon them to organize an All-Russian Convention confidently assuring them that there will be no serious divergences of opinion among the various groups. But one of the groups to which this appeal was made is the "Nabat" (the Alarm) group of Ukraine, known as the most active Anarcho-Makhnovite group.

And, finally, the group resolved not to cease its revolutionary struggle against the Communists, not to forego the tactics of General Strike, even when applied toward the Soviet government. It recognizes only free Soviets, possible only outside the framework of dictatorship.

It adopts a sharply negative attitude toward the Communist International and the entering into an understanding with the Soviet government via pacts.

We draw the attention of the Party to the activity of this organization as being the most disintegrating one, tending to undermine the morale of the vacillating members of our own organization for the purpose of winning them over to their own ranks. In case the counter-revolution succeeds even temporarily, this Anarcho-Syndicalist organization is liable to play a very active role.

5. *The Group of the Ukrainian "Nabat"*. This group is outspokenly pro-Makhno in its orientation. In all its activities it showed full readiness to aid Makhno not only when the latter worked with the Soviet government, but even when he came out against it. It worked towards the concentration of Anarchist forces in the region where Makhno was active, being thus greatly detrimental to the Soviet Republic.

In the period when Makhno had his agreement with the Soviet government the organ of the Confederation "Nabat" (Alarm) frankly wrote:

"Anarchism, which always leaned upon the mass movement of the workers, has to support the Makhno movement with all its power; it has to join this movement and close ranks with it. Hence, we must also become a part of the leading organ of this movement, the army, and try to organize with the help of the latter the movement as a whole."

6. Until recently there was in existence a legally authorized group "*Golos Trouda*". It published its paper, "*Golos Trouda*", in Petrograd and it had its own book store. This group also lost its balance during the Kronstadt rebellion, its headquarters having become one of the centers where the proclamations of the Kronstadt sailors were reprinted and from where they were circulated all over the city.

Up till now the Russian Communist party waged only an ideological struggle against the Anarchists. The organs of the Soviet government were often compelled to expose the Anarchist organizations when the latter came out in an open struggle against the Soviet government. Everyone knows about the explosion on the Leontievsky alley organized by an underground group of Anarchists. Such groupings are still in existence. Their activity comes very near to and has many points of contact with the activity of the counter-revolutionary

and white-guardist organizations. There are definite apprehensions and suspicions to the effect that some of these groupings are nothing but agencies of foreign capital. Thus, for instance, the literary works of the "Black Standard" hardly differ from the most reactionary works of the White-guard press.

The participation of Anarchist groups in the Kronstadt movement, their endeavor to disintegrate the only revolutionary army in the world, the Red Army; their subversive activity in factories; their work and agitation for the organization of the Peasant Union; their disintegrating and disorganizing influence upon our work; their attempts to demoralize some of the trade unions, such as the food workers, for instance; their united front with the objectively counter-revolutionary organization as the Social-Revolutionists — all that compels the Russian Communist party to draw the attention of the party as a whole to the activity of the Anarchist groups. It is the more urgent now since the petty-bourgeois elements have gotten hold of the greater part of the working class at the moment of its greatest weariness, thus preparing the ground for the successful work of these Anarchist groups.

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party is quite aware that the Anarchists attempt to make use of the fact that restrictions have been placed upon their groups in Soviet Russia for the purpose of stirring up sentiment against the Communist Party and the Soviet government. The Anarchists point out that in Soviet Russia they do not enjoy the right of free press which they allegedly possess in bourgeois states. Their press prints the vilest insinuations against Soviet Russia and the Comintern — and that is why they are tolerated in those bourgeois countries. Their Parisian paper "Libertaire" circulates the story that the delegates to the Second Congress, who were lost at sea during a storm, were drowned by the Soviet government in order to hush up some revelations which those delegates were allegedly prepared to make.*) That vile fabrication was seized upon by the bourgeois press of the whole world.

The Russian Communist party which is now carrying into effect the dictatorship of the proletariat, cannot make exceptions for those groups who cover up their counter-revolutionary aims with the Anarchist banner. That is why the Central Committee of the Russian Communist party approves the line adopted by the organs of the Soviet

*) Lepetite and some other French delegates drowned in the White Sea.

power who in answer to the counter-revolutionary activity of the Anarchist groups were compelled greatly to restrict their freedom of action.

(*"Vestnik Agitatzii y Propagandi,"* Nos. 11-12, May 25, 1921).

DOCUMENTS FROM PRISONS

A LETTER FROM THE ANARCHISTS IN THE RIAZAN PRISON

Riazan, Concentration Camps

April 27, 1921.

Dear Comrades:

We hasten to inform you that since April 26 we have been kept in the forced labor concentration camp of the City of Riazan. There are ten of us Anarchist comrades here: DAVID KOGAN, KURBATOV, LILOV, GAVRILOV, PILIPENKO, TARASIUK, KONSTANTIN FIODOROV, BUDANOV, KHOKHOTVA and FANYA BARON. Beside us, there are nine members of the right Social-Revolutionary party and sixteen Mensheviks who were brought here from the same Butirky prison. There are thirty-five of us in this camp.

We were taken out of the Butirky prison and brought here to Riazan on the night of April 25, between three and five o'clock at night. All the Socialists and Anarchists, 300 of us, were taken away and many of us were handled quite roughly.

At first we were taken out in our underwear, and only later were we allowed to go back and get our belongings.

Women were treated worst of all. Men were beaten up, some of them slugged over the head. The women were thrown down the ladder and some were dragged around by their hair. I was beaten up to such an extent that my body still keeps on aching. Most of us were mistreated, the soldiers even took aim at us with their rifles. I cannot describe all the details, but it was, indeed, a horrible night.*)

*) For detailed account of beatings see "Letters from Russian Prisons," pages 134-139.

We were all divided into groups of five and more people. Who else had been taken away from the Butirky prison, we do not know. We ask you to turn to the "Black Cross" and "Red Cross" for further information. Let us know the whereabouts of the rest of the comrades. We don't know yet.

We are deprived of fresh air, we have no right to take daily walks. The plank-beds are nauseating in their filth. Whatever one touches is filthy, everywhere there are bed bugs and other vermin. We intend to start fighting for better conditions. . . .

Just now we were told to pack up our belongings. We are to be sent somewhere — where we don't know.

With fraternal greetings,

IVAN TARASIUK.

P. S. Riazan, Prison, April 28.

Last night we were transferred to the prison. We are kept isolated from the rest. This seems to have been done by special order of the All-Russian Che-Ka. Thirty-five of us are kept in one cell. It will be very difficult to hold out here, especially after the regime in the Butirky prison.

Let us know who is still left in the Butirky or other Moscow prisons. I also ask you to find the whereabouts of Fanya Avrutzkaia. Send her my regards and let her know about me.

And so I am finishing my letter.

IVAN TARASIUK.

Riazan Prison, third corridor, cell No. 12.

(*This letter was printed in "Der Syndicalist", No. 27, 1921.*)

**A DECLARATION SENT BY THE POLITICAL PRISONERS OF
THE OREL ISOLATION PRISON TO THE PRESIDUM OF THE
ALL-RUSSIAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF SOVIET OF WORKERS
AND PEASANT DEPUTIES**

Supplementing the declaration sent to the Vtzik on May 5, about the beating up and the carrying off of the Socialists and Anarchists from the Butirky prison, we find it necessary to make public the conditions now prevalent in the Central Prison of Orel in which Socialists and Anarchists have been kept for more than a month.

Food. It is already the second month since we have been forced to live on prison food only, on products of bad quality. The bread given out here is so adulterated that it is impossible to use it as food.

Its nourishing quality is insignificant. The products are rationed out according to the prison norm, but the latter was deemed insufficient even by the People's Commissariat of Food Supplies. In addition, its quality is of the lowest kind; during the first half of the month we were fed on dried, putrid potatoes, and now the potatoes give place to rancid cabbages. The salt pork rationed out to us is putrid, of grey and even dark color. Our attempt to obtain better food by negotiating with local authorities did not lead to any results. And we cannot figure on any aid from the outside. Having been taken away from Moscow, we were thereby deprived of the opportunity to get food from the outside, which helped us so much with our prison food. In addition, according to the latest ordinance of the Che-Ka, it is only relatives that are permitted to send food to the prisoners, and so we have now a new obstacle in the matter of bettering our food. Moreover, our wives, relatives and acquaintances who get together for the purpose of organizing aid to the arrested Socialists and Anarchists are themselves arrested and exiled to the provinces under the same conditions. We feel that the Che-Ka aims by all means to make our position worse, to condemn us to a lasting starvation and to undermine our physical health.

Living on food of inferior quality already resulted in stomach illness. And twenty-five percent of the Socialists and Anarchists confined in the Orel prison are sick people.

Medical Help

On May 15 our comrades were examined by a medical commission. The latter found that out of 25 patients examined, 11 had tuberculosis, and with 5 of them — tuberculosis was an active form.

Social-Democrats:

- A. Smolensky — — — — active tuberculosis
- V. Neymark — — — — Tuberculosis
- A. Vasilyeva — — — — Tuberculosis
- I. Kheyfetz — — — — Deafness

Social-Revolutionists and

S.-R. Members of the Group "The People":

- E. A. Kostiushko — — — — Pleurisy
- A. M. Kusnetzov { From the
- M. I. Milokhin { group } Active
- F. D. Chernishev { "The People" } Tuberculosis

H. P. Smirnov — — — — Active tuberculosis
 T. M. Lande — — — — — Recurrent typhus
 A. M. Ananiev — — — — — Hernia and exema
 M. S. Lande — Chronic catarrh of the lungs
 A. V. Liberov — — — — — Tuberculosis

Anarchists:

M. Nakhamkin — — — — — Chronic malaria
 A. Shliakhovoy — — — — — Tuberculosis
 H. Kozlovtsava — Was beaten up, pregnant
 R. Kholpunov — — — — — Psychic derangement

Left Social-Revolutionists:

F. I. Luttard — — — — — Tuberculosis
 I. A. Shabalin—Heart attack and fainting spells
 E. I. Kormilitzina — — — — — Tuberculosis
 A. N. Speransky — — — — — Heart murmur
 K. T. Trotskaya — — — — — Heart neurosis
 A. Rosenberg — Is in hospital: rheumatic fever
 U. P. Yegelskaya — — — — — Heart neurosis
 L. P. Surova — — — — — Active tuberculosis

Medical help is lacking. Our sick comrades have to live on the same food as the others (the hospitable food is so scanty that those who had to live on it always complained of being hungry). The doctor makes his daily rounds, but he is helpless to do anything — the lack of the most elementary medicines places him in a helpless position. This is what our sick comrades are up against. The committee representing the political prisoners appealed to the All-Russian Che-Ka from the first days, stating the case of the sick comrades, pointing out that those comrades had already been examined by a medical Board in the Butirky prison and found to be seriously ill . . . but all in vain. The Che-Ka turned a deaf ear. Moreover, in April, it issued an order placing all of us under a severe prison regime, the alleged reason being that we "beat up" the Red Army soldiers who were on guard in prison. Our sick comrades were placed under the same regime (cells were tightly shut, the close stool had to be kept in the cell). Their health is being systematically undermined by the anti-sanitary conditions and the day may be not far off when it will be too late to demand any improvement of their situation.

Sanitary conditions are abominable. Waterpipes don't work; the

sewers are out of order. The cesspools are right in the middle of the prison yard; they are cleaned out by hand, the sewage being dumped into a ditch near the prison yard, fouling the air to such an extent that we are prevented from taking our daily walks.

The Prison Regime. All these privations are aggravated by the severity of the regime itself. The cells are always closed. The close stool poisons the air. The roll call is taken at eight o'clock. After that it is impossible to have the cells opened for an airing. Sick comrades, subject to violent attacks, are left to themselves for the whole night. The rapid increase of stomach and heart illnesses make it very important for us to keep the cells open. There is no lighting of any kind in the cells. And, of course, under such conditions, there can be no educational work carried on, no group studies, lectures or symposia. We meet each other only during the daily walks. A military guard always keeps watch in the corridors. We have to sleep on the bare cement floor, there is only one bed in the solitary cells on which, generally, two people are forced to stay. There are no benches or tables and some of us have to eat and drink standing.

Until lately we were denied the right to correspond with our people. During the entire month, all of us, 108 prisoners, received only two letters. Letters were sent to the Che-Ka to be examined and were kept there. Visiting is made difficult, a special permit is required from the All-Russian Che-Ka for that purpose. Food can be sent only by relatives, who have to prove their kinship with the prisoner. In fact, this deprives us of any chance to have our people visit us or send us food or clothes. Moreover, many of us did not get our belongings which remained in the Butirky prison, although their inventory was sent to the All-Russian Che-Ka a long time ago. The prisoners insist that these belongings be sent to them or that they be replaced in accordance with the inventory which is now in the possession of the Che-Ka.

Thus our demands can be summarized:

1. The improvement of our food by increasing the rations and raising the quality of products given out.
2. To release our sick comrades; or, at least, to transfer them to a sanatorium; to furnish some sort of medical assistance.
3. To change the prison regime, to keep the cells opened, to do away with the close stool, to enable us to conduct group studies, etc.

4. To allow us to maintain connections with the outside world, to abolish the restrictions placed upon visits and the sending of food to the prisoners.
5. To return the belongings of the prisoners left in the Butirky prison or to replace them in kind.
6. To permit the opening in Orel of a section of the Political Red Cross.

We know that the Moscow Soviet instructed its Presidium to undertake an investigation of the conditions under which the Socialists and Anarchists were carried off and beaten on April 26. We insist that this investigation be made and that along with that an investigation be also made of the conditions to which the confined Socialists and Anarchists are subjected. We declare that to live any longer under the unbearable conditions of malnutrition, lack of sanitation and general rigor of the prison regime will inevitably bring about the death of our sick comrades and will hopelessly ruin the health of all the rest of us.

We therefore declare that if our demands are ignored we shall be compelled to fall back upon the measures of self-defense which may be cruel to ourselves, but which, under given conditions, are the only ones we have within our reach.

P. Pro. Social Democrats (Signature)
 " *Social Revolutionists (Signature)*
 " *Left Social-Revolutionists (Signature)*
 " *Minority, the "People" group.*

TO THE PRESIDIUM OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN CHE-KA

(*Copy sent to the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets*)

From the political prisoners (*Social-Democrats, Social-Revolutionists, Anarchists*) of the House of Correction of the Vladimir province.

DECLARATION:

Having thrown us into prison more than half a year ago, the ruling Party did not only find it unnecessary to put us on trial or even to draw up some sort of indictment against us, but, having brought us here from various cities of Russia (from Moscow, Rostov on the Don, Kiev, Odessa, Kharkov, Yekaterinodar) it has kept us here, in the House of Correction of the Vladimir Province, for the last

five months, under conditions which we, who know too well the prisons of the Tzar's regime, must qualify as intolerable. The starvation prison ration (one pound of bread, one and one-half pounds of potatoes, four pounds of turnips, a little bit of salt — sugar is not given out for weeks); anti-sanitary and anti-hygienic conditions of confinement (damp cells, polluted cesspools in the yards, which we must use because of the utter break-down of plumbing in the prison); the lack of visits on the part of relatives, rendered almost impossible because of the distance and the high railroad fare; the resulting difficulty of helping us out materially and particularly in food matters — such are the conditions in which we have been kept for about half a year and about which we sent several declarations to the All-Russian Che-Ka and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets.

As a result of the long prison confinement under those conditions (most of us have been kept here more than four months, some of us for ten months and even more) the state of health of the majority of comrades (seventy to eighty percent) has taken a sharp turn for the worse; pneumonic catarrh, chronic bronchitis, anemia, lack of appetite — all this has become quite habitual with us.

The situation became worse with the coming of the cold weather, which brought a number of illnesses in its wake. The central heating system formerly used in this prison has been out of order for a few years. Taking into consideration the lack of repair materials, the constant break-down of pipes and batteries, the shortage of fuel (there is neither wood nor peat in the prison) and the feeble pressure in the water mains, taking all this into consideration it is quite clear that with the coming of winter we shall be faced with the prospect of having to stay in damp, cold cells — at least heated only at irregular intervals — added to which there is undernourishment, anti-sanitary and anti-hygienic conditions and the almost total lack of visits.

We protest against the exceptional prison regime to which the ruling party subjects its political adversaries, the Social-Democrats, Social-Revolutionists, and Anarchists. We demand from the state authorities who lack sufficient boldness to put us on public trial, should at least place us under such conditions of prison confinement which would not condemn us to starvation, and to suffer from intense cold and illnesses of all kinds.

On August 15 we appealed to the All-Russian Che-Ka asking to

have us all transferred to one of the well-organized prisons of Moscow. Our request was ignored. Now, with the winter already in view, we again insist upon the same. The ignoring of our present demand will be regarded by us as a refusal on the part of the ruling Party to afford to its political adversaries the minimum of normal conditions of prison confinement.

P. Pro. Political Prisoners

Social-Democrats: BOGDANOV, E. GOSDISHEVSKY,
MALKIN, S. TZEYTLIN, B. SERNY,

Social-Revolutionists: B. KILCHEVSKY.

Anarchists: A. OLONETZKY.

THE PROTEST OF THE MOSCOW ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST ORGANIZATIONS

To V. I. Lenin, The All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets. The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, The Communist International, The All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions, The International Council of Trade Unions. Copies to: The Council of People's Commissars, The Moscow Council of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies.

The undersigned Anarcho-Syndicalist organizations, after having carefully considered the situation that has developed lately in connection with the country-wide persecution of Anarchists in Moscow, Petrograd, Kharkov, and other cities of Russia and the Ukraine — including the forcible suppression of Anarchist organizations, clubs, publications and so forth—hereby express their decisive and energetic protest against this unprecedented crushing of not only every agitational-propagandistic activity, but even of all purely cultural work by Anarchist organizations.

The systematic man-hunt of Anarchists in general, and of Anarcho-Syndicalists in particular, with the result that every prison and jail in Soviet Russia is filled with our comrades, fully coincided in time and spirit with Lenin's speech at the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party. On that occasion Lenin announced that the most merciless war must be declared against what he termed "the petty

bourgeois anarchist elements" which, according to him, are developing even within the Communist Party itself, owing to the "Anarcho-Syndicalist tendencies" of the Labor Opposition. On the very day that Lenin made the above statement, numbers of Anarchists were arrested all over the country, without the least cause or explanation. No charges have been preferred against any of our arrested comrades, though some of them have already been condemned to prison sentences, without hearing or trial, and in their absence. The conditions of their imprisonment are exceptionally vile and brutal. Thus one of the arrested, Comrade Maximoff, after numerous vain protests against the incredibly unsanitary conditions in which he was forced to exist in the Taganka prison, was driven to the only means of protest left him—a hunger-strike, which he declared on April 1. Another comrade, Yartchuk, released after an imprisonment of six days, was soon rearrested, without any charges being preferred against him on either occasion.

According to reliable information received by us, some of the arrested Anarchists are being sent to the prisons of Samara, far away from home and friends, and thus deprived of what little comradely assistance they might have been able to receive nearer home. A number of other comrades have been forced by the terrible conditions of their imprisonment to declare a hunger-strike. One of them, after fasting twelve days, became dangerously ill.

Physical violence, even, is practiced upon our comrades in prison. The statement of the Anarchists in the Butirky prison, in Moscow, signed by thirty-eight comrades, and sent to the Executive Committee of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission on March 16, contains among other things the following statement: "On March 15, Comrade Tikhon Kashirin was brutally attacked and beaten in the prison of the Special Department of the Extraordinary Commission by your agent Mago and assistants, in the presence of the Prison Warden Dukis."

Besides the wholesale arrests and the physical violence perpetrated on our comrades, the government is waging systematic war against the educational work of all Anarchist organizations. It has closed a number of our clubs, as well as the Moscow office of the Anarcho-Syndicalist publishing establishment "Golos Trouda".

A similar campaign of man-hunt took place in Petrograd, on March 15. Numbers of Anarchists were arrested, without cause, the office and the printing place of "Golos Trouda" were closed, and its

co-workers imprisoned. No charges have been preferred against any of our arrested comrades, all of whom are still in prison.

The virtual suppression of the publishing work of the Anarcho-Syndicalist group "Golos Trouda" also paralyzes the main activity of the "Peter Kropotkin Memorial Committee," namely the publication of the works of Kropotkin. Endless obstacles are, moreover, placed in the way of the general work connected with the "Peter Kropotkin Memorial Committee," as in the matter of housing, telephone connections, and so forth.

These unbearably autocratic tactics of the government towards the Anarchists (going even to the extent of confiscating the wreaths on the Kropotkin grave for use at other funerals) is unquestionably the result of the general policy of the government, which is exclusively controlled by the Communist Party, in regard to Anarchism, Syndicalism and their adherents.

This state of affairs, in which the Anarchists are completely deprived of the opportunity to carry on systematic work of any kind, and in the absence of any guarantees that even our purely cultural and educational efforts—such as publishing, the organization of the Kropotkin Museum, and so forth—are not to be suddenly and deliberately destroyed, is forcing us to raise our voices in loud protest against the panicky-brutal suppression of the Anarchist movement by the Bolshevik Government.

Moscow, April 10, 1921.

Anarcho-Syndicalist League "Golos Trouda":

A. SHAPIRO, *Secretary*

A. TZVETKOV, *Publishing Manager,*

All-Russian Confederation of Anarcho-Syndicalists:

S. MARCUS, *Member Executive Committee*

League of Anarchist Propaganda:

ALEXEI BOROVOY, *Secretary*

We fully concur in this protest:

ALEXANDER BERKMAN

EMMA GOLDMAN

*(The above protest was published in the book:
"Letters from Russian Prisons," pp. 253-255).*

THE APPEALS FROM TAGANKA PRISON

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS,
ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS AND ANARCHISTS OF ALL COUN-
TRIES FROM THE ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS AND
ANARCHISTS CONFINED WITHIN THE MOSCOW PRISONS.

We, Revolutionary Anarchists and Socialists, incarcerated in Mos-
cow prisons, resolved to protest as a matter of duty before the work-
ers of Russia and of the whole world against turning the First of
May into the official holiday of the ruling party, the Bolsheviks.

The Bolsheviks are trying to make it their own holiday, though
tens of thousands of workers and peasants are languishing in prisons,
though Revolutionary Socialist and Anarchist parties and groups are
forcibly suppressed and even outlawed, and though the Bolsheviks
violate the rights of workers and peasants, imprisoning them and hold-
ing them as hostages for the slightest sign of protest.

We, Revolutionary Socialists and Anarchists, understand the First
of May as the day of protest of the workingmen of all the world against
all forms of violence, domination and exploitation.

Since we are deprived of the opportunity to celebrate the First
of May holiday together with the international proletariat, we are
determined to declare a one-day hunger-strike as a sign of protest.

*Members of the Confederation of Russian
Anarcho-Syndicalists*

*G. MAXIMOFF, E. YARTCHUK and others
and*

*Members of the Party of Left Social-Revolutionists,
E. TRUTOVSKY and others.*

(Printed in "Der Syndicalist," (supplement) No. 33, Berlin, 1921).

FROM THE ALL-RUSSIAN "BLACK CROSS"

Comrades! Hundreds of imprisoned Anarchists are now languish-
ing in the penitentiaries and prisons of Soviet Russia.

Their material conditions are horrible. The food rations given
out in the prison are not only insufficient, but cannot even be taken
into account. The greater number of comrades have become ema-
ciated, many of them cannot stand on their feet and the others are
approaching the latter state.

The All-Russian Black Cross is using all its efforts to obtain means to alleviate to some extent the situation in which our imprisoned comrades are now placed.

But the efforts of the All-Russian Black Cross are insignificant as compared to the real extent of the needs of our comrades.

What is needed now is help on a wide mass scale; aid of an urgent and immediate kind!

The Russian Black Cross appeals to all toilers to take part in this work of alleviating the conditions in which the imprisoned Anarchists find themselves. Let every one contribute his share, let every one donate to the Black Cross whatever he can: underwear, food products, books and other things.

Everything will be turned to use, everything is of enormous value!

In the first place, we appeal to you, our Anarchist comrades. Read the letter of those who speak to you from behind the prison bars:

*To All Anarchist Organizations and to Individual
Anarchist Comrades*

Dear Comrades:

It is very distressing to us to write to you about it, for we are certain that with all your desire to help us, your opportunities in this respect are very limited. However, due to the aggravated food crisis the situation of imprisoned Anarchists in respect to food has become so threatening that we are compelled to urge you to strain all your efforts in extending all possible aid in order to enable us to survive the most difficult months ahead.

Many of us, you know, have been kept in prison for a long time. We have been starving almost continuously and are emaciated to the breaking point. Many of us are seriously ill.

There are cases of incipient scurvy. Many have incurred serious heart troubles and there are numerous cases of illnesses caused by pneumatory and heart defects. The slightest illness on the part of anyone who is kept in the common cell becomes sweeping in its effect upon the rest of us. We have already pointed out that all suffer from inanition, general anemia, etc. To speak about all this with comrades and relatives during the visiting hours is, of course, impossible. The only way is to appeal collectively to all our comrades.

We know that the comrades are organizing a "Black Cross" and that they are applying their efforts to keep up the health of the

comrades who are now languishing in the innumerable prisons. But the efforts made already are not sufficient—and for the immediate period the problem is acute. The food provisions and bread rations assigned to us by the prison authorities, are diminishing daily in quantity and quality. Without exaggeration, we may say that imprisonment becomes a slow form of death by starvation. We, therefore, implore you, our dear comrades, who still enjoy freedom, to redouble your energy, to strain your efforts to the utmost, to co-ordinate as much as you can the work of the various organizations of the “Black Cross”; and to inform all those about our situation who may be in a position to extend effective aid to the “Black Cross” and the imprisoned comrades. In other words, we ask you to bring up to the highest possible level your work in keeping up the health of the imprisoned comrades and to eliminate the shortcomings which may drag that level down. Because the situation for the coming difficult months looks vrey serious, we are compelled to make this appeal to you. Perhaps it would be useful to inform the comrades abroad as to our conditions in the prisons.

It is for you to see what can and should be done under the circumstances!

With comradely greetings

The Anarchists confined in the Taganka prison.

VL. BARMASH, VOLIN, M. VOROBYEV, A. GUYEVSKY,
G. GORELIK, (Anatoly), G. MAXIMOFF, MARK, S. PLET-
NEV, POSDNISHEV, OUSPENSKY, (Martinov), FEDOROV
(Uncle Kostya), FELDMAN, SHEROSHEVSKY, YUDIN,
YARTCHUK.

Moscow, Taganka Prison, June 3, 1921.

TO THE PRESIDUM OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
ALL-RUSSIAN SOVIETS

(Copy sent to the Presidium of the All-Russian Che-Ka)

THE DECLARATION OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS, SOCIAL-
REVOLUTIONISTS, LEFT SOCIAL-REVOLUTIONISTS-INTER-
NATIONALISTS, ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS, ANARCHISTS
AND NON-PARTISAN SOCIALISTS KEPT IN THE
TAGANSKAYA PRISON (MOSCOW).

The conditions of our confinement in respect to food are becoming more and more unbearable from day to day. Many of us—whose health was undermined, drained and weakened by the difficult years

of the pre-revolution period, by emigree life, by long prison terms at hard labor or in exile during the Tzar's government and by chronic undernourishment and intense work during the revolution—have been kept in the prisons of the U. S. F. S. R. continuously (or with very brief intervals of freedom) for more than two years. The general conditions of our present life in the prisons, the constant reshifting from place to place, the overcrowding to be found in every prison, and all kinds of misunderstanding arising between the prisoners and the authorities are in themselves incomparably more difficult than conditions in the old prisons. In shifting us around from one place to another and tearing us away from relatives and friends, who might extend us some help; by frequently arresting and exiling not only our acquaintances but also our families for the sole crime of sending us food; by restricting in all possible ways the work of the Red and Black Cross societies, going even so far as to raid and ambush those organization; by pursuing this policy, the authorities create a situation whereby the prison ration becomes the only source of existence for most of us. But, if we, Socialists and Anarchists of the Taganskaya prison, were receiving recently the "starvation" ration, amounting to three-quarters of a pound of bread, twenty-four zolotnics (zolotnic is a ninety-sixth part of a Russian pound) and thirty-two zolotnics of pearled barley per day, plus a few vegetables, we are now receiving only half a pound of bread, six zolotnics of meat, nine zolotnics of pearled barley and an insignificant quantity of dry vegetables, the latter being of a very inferior quality. It is this starvation diet that leads to all kind of illnesses, such as scurvy, tuberculosis, stomach and intestine troubles and a rapidly developing anemia. It is clear that under such conditions prison confinement becomes, literally speaking, a form of slow death.

On the basis of what was said above, we, Socialists and Anarchists of the Taganskaya prison, numbering 100 people, find it necessary to bring the following to the attention of the government organs as well as to the attention of the working masses of Russia and abroad; if the government holds that it is within its right to doom us to a long stay in the prisons; if it finds possible and acceptable to itself to keep us in confinement for months and years—it must therewith obligate itself to keep us in such conditions which would not render our prison sentence tantamount to a death sentence. But if the government finds that it cannot provide us with more or less tolerable food, thus turning our prison confinement into a sort of death

sentence, then the outrage perpetrated against us trespasses all moral boundaries. Considering the utter impossibility of continuing our present existence in the prison, an existence threatening us with utter ruin and also considering that the government seems to be less and less able to provide us with a minimum of essential nourishment, we declare definitely that under such conditions we cannot permit any further stay in prison.

We therefore demand from the government if not release from prison, at least that it immediately provide us with normal nourishment, under which prison confinement would not become a slow form of killing us off. In presenting our categorical demand to the government and bringing it to the attention of the whole world, we warn that if our demands are not gratified in the near future, we shall be compelled to revert to all kinds of measures at our disposal in order to find a way out of the situation. The responsibility for anything that might happen in the future we place beforehand upon the government organs.

(Signed by 78 Socialists and Anarchists now kept in the Taganskaya prison. "Sotzialistichesky Viestnik".)

THE HUNGER STRIKE AND THE DEPORTATION OF ANARCHISTS FROM SOVIET RUSSIA

I.

THE SICKNESS AND DEATH OF P. A. KROPOTKIN

The year 1921 opened up in a disquieting manner for the Anarchists. Toward the end of 1920 Trotzky effected a large surgical operation, having smashed up Makhno's army which at that time still enjoyed the status of an ally; and along with the Makhno army was also smashed the "Nabat," the "Confederation of Anarchist Organizations of Ukraine."

Many active workers of that Confederation were arrested (Mark, A. Baron, A. Olonetzky, I. Kabas, Chekeres-Dolenko, Volin, etc.). The same fate overtook all the delegates at the convention called by this Confederation representing a number of Anarchist organizations.

The circumstances under which the arrests took place, and also the hasty and mysterious transference of the prisoners from Kharkov to Moscow raised many fears for the life of the comrades. The Anarcho-Syndicalist conference taking place at that time in Moscow was swayed by those fears. A committee designated by the conference (it consisted of comrades A. Schapiro, A. Borovoy, A. Aleynikov and G. Maximoff) kept on visiting the All-Russian Che-Ka, but all was in vain. These arrests agitated and disquietened the Anarchist circles. Another factor contributing to this state of anxiety was the alarming news about the health of P. A. Kropotkin.

A temporary improvement in the health of P. A. Kropotkin gave place to a sudden turn for the worse. The Bolsheviks dispatched two of the best physicians of Moscow; from the Anarchists went comrade Atabekian, a practicing physician and Emma Goldman. The "Izvestia" (the official organ of the Soviets) began to publish daily bulletins informing the readers about the course of Kropotkin's illness. The Bolsheviks showered the utmost attention upon the sick man. It was as if they tried to atone for all the evil they had done to Pietr Alexeevich Kropotkin: chasing him from one apartment to the other while he was in Moscow, the numerous and petty persecutions to which he was subjected on their part in Dmitrov, etc. His illness, aggravated by his old age was getting the best of him. The news coming from Dmitrov was sad. It was felt that the great revolutionist and thinker was nearing his end and that soon he would be swallowed up by eternity. In connection with that, rumors began to circulate to the effect that the Bolsheviks were organizing a burial committee of members of the Moscow Soviet and that this committee would take upon itself the burial of Kropotkin. To bury the great champion of the Anarchist idea, the challenger of the State, at the expense of the latter. This, indeed, would be cynicism in its most naked form.

From Dmitrov came reports that P. A. Kropotkin would hold out only a few hours. This was on February the seventh; on the morning of February the eighth the sad news finally arrived: Kropotkin was already dead. . . .

Immediately the Anarchist organizations designated a body calling itself "The Committee of Anarchist Organizations For the Burial of P. A. Kropotkin."

Acting very energetically, this committee defeated the Bolshevik intent to bury P. A. at the expense of the State and thus to gain publicity before the international proletariat. And because of that the

Bolsheviks tried in turn to molest this committee in numerous ways, all of which was recounted in the report of the committee.

Immediately after the burial the committee resolved to organize a memorial week in honor of the deceased. Every day during the week lectures and symposiums were organized in various parts of Moscow, dealing with the personality of Kropotkin and also his doctrine. This week was not forbidden, only because the Bolsheviks feared the outbreak of an international scandal. The Anarchists succeeded during that week in unfolding a sweeping plan of propaganda. The All-Russian Che-Ka lay in wait for the proper moment enabling it to wreak vengeance upon all those who showed themselves active during this Kropotkin week, and also to square accounts with some members of the burial committee. This moment soon arrived.

II

KRONSTADT EVENTS, ARRESTS

No sooner did the Kropotkin week draw to an end than various sorts of reports began to come from Kronstadt and Petrograd: some people were saying that Kronstadt and Petrograd were in the hands of the Whites, others asserted that the sailors rebelled and that they were joined by the workers of Petrograd. The Soviet papers kept a profound silence. No one knew what was the matter, what should or should not be believed. Finally, the Soviet press "opened up," and informed its readers that a rebellion was in full swing . . . a White-Guardist rebellion. It was only when the resolutions of Kronstadt became known (through underground channels) that the Bolshevik lies took on their proper nature. It turned out that the sailors who still remembered the October days of 1917, rebelled in the name of the now trampled ideas of that revolution.

The Communist Party struck alarm. The all-Russia Che-Ka and the War Commissariat (L. Trotzky) began to work full speed. A wave of arrests swept the country. Troops were drawn toward Petrograd. Arrests and searches continued for more than two weeks. On the night of March 8 two members of the Executive Bureau of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation, Yartchuk and Maximoff (the two were also members of the Burial Committee) were arrested. On the same night more than twenty Anarchists and an equal number of left Social-Revolutionists were taken to prison. (Among the Anarchists were Gorelik, Tikhon Kashirin, Vladimir Potiekhin; the

last two were executed in October 1921 in connection with the case of Liev Cherny). On the same night in Petrograd and Moscow a veritable "pogrom" was made upon the Anarcho-Syndicalist publishing house "Golos Trouda".

After the "rebellion" of the Kronstadt sailors had been suppressed, some of the arrested Anarchists were released; and the others were placed in various prisons of Moscow: the prisons of the all-Russian Che-Ka, the Butirky, the Tagansky and Novinsky prisons.

It is to be noted that the arrests of March 8 were not confined to one locality, namely that of Moscow: they took place all over Russia. Anarchists were arrested in many cities. There were numerous cases when the arrested Anarchists were presented with demands to sign a statement foreswearing any intention to go to the convention called by the Executive Bureau of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation for April 25, 1921.

III

THE TAGANSKAYA PRISON

Thus the Communist prisons were filled up with new cadres. . . .

We are omitting here in our story the beating up of the Anarchist Kashirin and the left Social-Revolutionist Yeliseev, which took place in the prison of the all-Russian Che-Ka.*) Nor are we going to dwell at length upon the beatings administered en masse to the political prisoners in Butirsky prison, which took place on April 25, 1921, while the prisoners were being taken out for the purpose of distributing them in the various provincial prisons.†) We shall only point out in this connection that guided by some considerations of its own, the Che-Ka replaced the Butirsky prison with the Tagansky prison as the distributing center of the political prisoners: the political section of the latter was rapidly being filled up with people brought from the south: Social-Revolutionists, Social-Democrats and Anarchists.

In May, some of the inmates of the Butirsky prison were also transferred to this section: among them were: Mark, Volin, Guyevsky, about five more Anarchists and a few from groups of various political affiliations.

*) See pp. 249-250.

†) See "The Letters From Russian Prisons", pp. 134-139.

By that time the rigorous regime of the prison was undermined by the ceaseless struggle of the political prisoners with the prison administration and the Che-Ka, which resulted that the political prisoners enjoyed almost full freedom within the prison walls.

IV

THE CONFINEMENT WAS TO BE LONG.

The political prisoners were distributed in groups corresponding to their party affiliations: every party collective had its own cells, its own elected delegate—"Starosta" (Elder); the entire section had a "Starostat," that is, a committee of the delegates of all collectives.

The number of people in the Anarchist collective varied. In June it was about 13 people. In respect to the views of its members, the collective was far from being homogeneous. The members differed in their tactical, ideological views and interpretations of Anarchism, and also in the respective place held by each in the movement: alongside of gray haired comrades were also youths who were newcomers in the movement. There were young people in this group (Mikhailov, Yudin, Voribiev, Sheroshevsky) who just had entered the movement and who were arrested merely because they had met openly in a legal meeting place to discuss the problem of organizing the Anarchistically minded students of Moscow into some sort of body which would pursue the aim of self-education along Anarchist lines.

The prison collective also comprised members of "The Nabat," the Confederation of Anarchist Organizations of Ukraine: Mark, member of the Secretariat; Gouyevsky, a worker from the Kharkov Railway shops, and Volin. Most of these people were arrested on November 25, 1920, in Kharkov on charges of carrying on active Anarchist propaganda and attempting to call an Anarchist convention. There were also members of the Executive Bureau of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation (Yartchuk and Maximoff) who were arrested in Moscow on March 8, in connection with the Kronstadt events; their attempt to call an Anarcho-Syndicalist convention and trumped up charges of various kinds were placed against them. And, finally, there were: Fiedorov, Shilkin, Gorelik and Feldman. Such was the make-up of the Anarchist collective of the Tagansky prison.

Every member of this collective felt that his confinement would drag out for a long time and that some would be sentenced to far

away, starving and wild northern regions. There were many signs pointing to such a conclusion: the panic produced in government circles by the Kronstadt rebellion, the unrest among the workers of Moscow and other cities, the disquieting state of the villages, the woeful bread shortages, the rather dismal harvest outlook and, finally, the most portentous sign was the continuing ferocity of the all-Russian Che-Ka. Four members of the collective were already sentenced (without any trial, of course) to three years of concentration camp. The Anarcho-Syndicalist members of the collective (Yartchuk and Maximoff), who during the Bolshevik rule had been arrested more than six times but were never kept in prison for a long time, were now imprisoned for good, having been "promised" a long stay at the government's expense: until the new harvest at least, that is, if the new harvest promised to be good.

Everyone saw how hopeless the situation was becoming. Everyone knew that the confinement would last until the inner situation in the country becomes so favorable as to meet the expectations of the Communists, in other words, the confinement would drag out indefinitely. And many of the prisoners began to entertain the ideas of organizing an escape, of declaring a hunger strike and other means of obtaining freedom.

V

ALL DECIDE TO DECLARE A HUNGER STRIKE

The young people who languished in prison for no cause whatsoever began to talk about a hunger strike. This idea got hold of a few other people. The collective was now faced with the probability of having several hunger strikes carried out separately by a few individuals. The idea of a hunger strike got such a firm hold upon some that no amount of persuasion on the part of the older and more experienced comrades was of any avail. Nor was it of much use to point out to them that this measure would be highly inexpedient at a moment when the Communist reaction was raging throughout the country and hunger strikes were nearly becoming commonplace affairs, entirely ignored by the Communist authorities. Only when an appeal was made to them to wait until the entire collective be given an opportunity to join the hunger strike, did they consent to withdraw their decision of declaring an immediate strike, thus averting sporadic outbreaks.

Time went on! The idea of the strike was taking root. Even the

older and more self-restrained comrades began to give increasing thought to this idea. The opening day of the International Congress of Red Trade Unions was drawing near. All waited for the arrival of the convention delegates of our own persuasion who were coming from various countries. We placed hopes upon their forthcoming help, and we were not deceived in these hopes.

The idea of a hunger strike was working like a drill upon our minds. And then the final decision came. With all the pondering and weighing that was going on within us, it was one sleepless night that finally persuaded all in favor of this decision.

The prison was fast asleep. It was dark and quiet all around us. The stillness of the night was broken up by the nervous snoring of the sleeping prisoners and a quiet, very quiet whisper.

"Maximich, are you asleep?"

"No. . . . But why?"

"I can't fall asleep. . . . You know I keep on thinking about the hunger strike. . . . It may succeed. . . . What do you think of it?"

There followed a pause, a long pause. And then came a quiet whispering reply. Long, throughout the dark night, the two kept whispering in the midst of the sleeping comrades.

All the pros and cons of this planned hunger strike were weighed during this whispered conversation. Everything was taken into account: the political situation, the lack of publicity in the country, the specific weight and possible role of the Red Trade Union convention, the degree to which the Bolsheviki happened to be interested in the Anarcho-Syndicalists of Western Europe, the kind and extent of the activity of our friends at large and with all that discussion, doubts still lingered.

"All right," said Maximoff, "I agree with this idea of a hunger strike, but only in case its principal aim is a protest, a demonstration to our Western European comrades who came to this Profintern convention. Up till now these comrades have not believed the truth that we were telling them ever since they were here in 1920. And in order to have them believe and thus to save the Anarchist movement of Western Europe from a Bolshevist tendency we must strike and even die. . . . This is a grand cause. . . . The release from prison should be only a formal demand. . . ."

"I agree to that," said Mark.

"Tomorrow morning we call a meeting of the collective and lay this proposal before it. . . . And now, good night!"

“Good night!”

The whisper died away and stillness reigned again in the cell.

In the morning, at a closed session, the entire membership of the Anarchist collective unanimously decided to launch this struggle which was not to be given up even if it led to the death of some of us; it was resolved that under the circumstances, it would be necessary to sacrifice ourselves for the triumph of our cause. This decision was conveyed to the comrades left at large—Olga Freydlin and others; their approval having been received, a declaration was presented to the all-Russian Che-Ka, the Executive Committee of the Soviets, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Executive Committees of the Comintern and Profintern in which the high-handed manner and the unwarranted character of the arrests and confinements were pointed out, and the immediate release of the prisoners demanded. If the request was not granted, a hunger strike would be declared upon the expiration of a five day period.

VI

CELL NO. 4 ON HUNGER STRIKE

The Taganka prison is situated in one of the suburbs of Moscow.

It is a low building of a dingy-red color, with grated windows and heavy, massive iron gates. On both sides of the building are stone walls with barbed wire and tapering nails on top of them. Those walls separate the street from the prison yard; the prison is in the background of this yard. Two parallel gates lead from this building to the large courtyard of the prison church.

To the right side of the gate inside the courtyard, towers a huge, five-story structure, enclosed with a large wooden fence, the ring-like space between both being reserved for daily promenading of the prisoners. To the left side of the gate are the prison shops and the rectangle of the general building one side of which almost faced the gates. The ground floor of this wing contains the section reserved for political prisoners. A direct line traced from the gates to the background of the courtyard leads to a dingy three-storied building. Old stairs lead to the interior of this prison; to the left, other stairs lead to the second floor, the section for criminals of minor age; the third floor the prison hospital. On the basement floor was the section for “politicals.” A massive door leads to the interior of this section; it covers another grated iron door beyond

which is a small platform with a table at which the prison guard is seated. The grated iron doors opened into a long narrow corridor with broken windows. All along the right side of this corridor are strung the cells of the politicals.

Here is the first cell. It was occupied by the right Social-Revolutionists, the following was that of the Social Democrats, the third one was again held by the Social-Revolutionists; the following one was used for the kitchen and toilets, then came the cell occupied by the Anarchists, the following one was of mixed occupancy and then the last—the cell of the left Social-Revolutionists.

All the cells are about the same, differing only in size. A cell is a room with two or three windows on the same level of the ground, with low ceilings, damp walls, asphalt floors. Every cell contained twelve iron beds—six on each side—screwed on to the wall and covered with dusty straw mattresses. In the center of the cell is a wooden dining table with long wooden benches placed alongside of it.

As a result of the persistent and ceaseless struggle with the prison administration, the grated doors were never shut. And this was not the only concession extorted as a result of such a struggle: only the iron gates leading to the outside were closed for the political prisoners; the corridor was kept open. The political prisoners did not only have a chance to keep in touch with each other but were arranging lectures, debates; were walking about freely in the church courtyard where some played games while others took sunbaths under the shrubbery of a stunted acaccia tree. Incidentally, sunbaths were a necessity, saving many a prisoner from scurvy which was sweeping the prison at that time.

Let us look into cell No. 4. Thirteen prison cots, and stretched upon them are thirteen people all of whom were recently healthy, gay and sprightly. Now their eyes are deeply sunk, the skin tightly drawn over the sharply protruding cheekbones; their voices are feeble, conversations are slow and sluggish, and gestures are lifeless. These are the Anarchists who had decided on their own "free will" to die or to obtain freedom. The hunger strike has already entered its sixth day. Some of them cannot walk without aid, and that is why the comrades from the left Social-Revolutionists are keeping duty at the table.

But the strikers are in spirited mood. . . . Three days ago

Chistiakoy, the investigator of the all-Russian Che-Ka, came to the prison. He demanded that the hunger strike be given up.

"The government," he said, "will not yield, and certainly not under the pressure of a hunger strike."

"In that case," he was told by the representatives of the hunger strikers, "you can go back. . . . you know what we demand: freedom for all or you shall have thirteen corpses on your hands!"

A desperate, unequal struggle with the state was in full swing; it gave courage to and raised the spirit of the hunger strikers; from the outside, through comrade Olga Freydlin, our messenger and chief backer, (to whom we chiefly owe our victory) we were beginning to get consoling news: the Anarcho-Syndicalist delegates to the Profintern became interested in the situation of the Anarchists; in other words, our act of protest began to produce the desired result. A movement of protest had been stirred up among the comrades at large.

A committee was organized for the purpose of sending a delegation to Dzherzhinsky and Lenin. The committee was composed of Sirole, Godeau, Lavale, Orlandis, A. Berkman, A. Shapiro. When asked by Godeau as to the legitimacy of the arrests of Anarchists, Dzherzhinsky indignantly declared:

"What a question! . . . What do you think we have? A Che-Ka within the Che-Ka? . . ." The delegation to Lenin consisting of Sirole Godeau, Orlandis, Tom Mann, Kaskayden and a few German comrades, had some difficulty in obtaining a hearing with Lenin. Having been finally compelled to receive them, Lenin declared that we, the arrested Anarchists, were dangerous bandits who cannot and should not be released, but since the Committee insisted upon a definite answer, he, together with Trotzky, Bucharin, Zinoviev and Kamenjev,*) will discuss this question, and a definite answer will be given the next day.

We knew through comrade Olga Freydlin that the delegates were kept well informed of the situation by the comrades at large (through E. Goldman, A. Berkman, A. Shapiro, etc.) and this gave us strength and firmness to continue our hunger strike. The other collectives were not aware of it. They saw that the situation was becoming worse; in people who are out on a hunger strike for

*) Of this all-powerful group of five leaders, no one is now left in Russia. Lenin died; Trotzky is in exile, and the rest were shot by Stalin.

eight days, a process of intense bodily disintegration already sets in; the mouths of the victims give out a strong cadaverous odor; there are cases of fainting, (three comrades could not get up, and one of them began to lose consciousness and the faculty of hearing). The life of the other collectives (Social-Democrats, (Social-Revolutionists) became a veritable moral torture. Moved by a sense of solidarity with our struggle, they decided to join the hunger strike, waiting only for our consent to launch upon it: but we were slow in granting our consent.

Everyone was struck with a feeling of horror when passing our cell. Even the prison authorities who had seen all sorts of sights would recoil in horror when going through the routine of the daily roll call: the guards would jump back, shutting the door violently; some would even keep back from entering our cell, so greatly shocked were they from what they had seen. . . .

The Communists, however, were not in a hurry. The hunger strike was entering into its ninth day. Death already marked out three victims. . . . It hovered in the cell. . . . Its bony hand was ready to pounce upon the victim. . . . Soon it will strangle its first victim, turning then to the second, third, getting everyone of us in turn. . . .

A doctor, one of the imprisoned socialists (Litkens), is constantly on duty in our cell, feeling the pulse of everyone of us.

At night, remembering the experience of the Butirky prison where the group of hunger strikers was broken up by forcible removal of the prisoners, the various collectives of politicals established their watches in order to forestall an attempt on the part of the Che-Ka to transfer the hunger strikers to the hospital and administer artificial feeding, and also break up the strike by isolating the members of the group. These measures of precaution on the part of the prisoners were taken ever since attempts to break up the strike had been made. On the sixth day of the hunger strike orders for the release of four comrades were received, but the latter refused to leave the prison without the others and they continued their hunger strike.

Another disquieting day passed, tense with anxiety. The tenth day of the hunger strike! The comrades at large deeply stirred up, showed great anxiety about our lives. At noon, the delegates of the Profintern Congress received a letter from L. Trotzky: this was

Lenin's promised answer.*) The Communists decided to release the hunger strikers under condition of having them expelled from Soviet Russia. Trotzky demanded that the delegates write a letter to the prisoners on hunger strike, requesting them to give up the strike and accept the offered terms, and he promised to have this letter conveyed to the prisoners. However, the Che-Ka failed to transmit this letter to us. But we did find out about it through other sources (through our indefatigable go-between, comrade Olga Freydlin) on the very same day and we decided to concur with the wishes of the delegates.

Evening. . . . The eleventh day of the hunger strike! It is dark everywhere, only in cell No. 4 the light is on. The comrade on duty, is watching with sadness in his eyes the agony of starving comrades. . . . The politicals on guard, their faces closely leaning upon the window grates, are peering into the darkness. The prison is enveloped by a dead silence: not a stir is heard. One can almost hear and feel the darkness. . . .

And then the sudden clinking of the keys, the grating of the iron doors, the ring of the telephone piercing the dead silence and military steps resounding in the courtyard; the sound of voices. . . . of many voices. . . .

At once the entire section became alive, the politicals jumped to their feet, ready to repulse any attempt at having us taken away by force. The death cell, which at first was plunged in darkness as a measure of precaution was suddenly flooded with light, following which the door opened suddenly and a military figure walking erect, with the firm measured gait of an army man, entered our cell, and cast rapid glances at both sides and addressed us, enunciating every word clearly:

"In the name of the government I have the following to announce to you: if you give up your hunger strike, you will be released and deported abroad."

We asked him to leave the cell for ten minutes so that we might confer on the proposal. Ten minutes later Yagoda, it was Yagoda who brought us this message,**) came back and he was told that the terms had been accepted. Life triumphed over death. . . .

Everyone heaved a sigh of relief, everyone grew merry, greeting

*) See pp. 499-502.

***) Yagoda was executed by Stalin's order in 1937.

us upon our victory, praising us for our steadfastness, grit and self-discipline: everyone was bustling joyfully, preparing our first meals. At three o'clock in the morning the entire section was alive, humming like an aroused bee-hive. They all had the impression of seeing before them dead men coming to life again.

The hunger strike was ended. What were its results? As far as we can see, its results were considerable. First, it showed the naked truth to our comrades from abroad. Second, it opened the eyes of the Profintern delegates and the Bolsheviks could not deceive them any longer. Third, it exposed the lies of the Bolsheviks: especially so after Bucharin took the floor at the last session of the Profintern convention presenting the point of view of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on political persecution, which stand was immediately contested in the counter speech delivered by comrade Sirole. Fourth, it raised the prestige of the hunger strike and undermined the prestige of the government and it instilled a feeling of respect toward the Anarchists on the part of the other parties. It was a grand political manifestation which gave us ground for legitimate pride.

VII

WE ARE RELEASED

The hunger strike ended, but the struggle had to be kept up. Yagoda in announcing the terms of the government, declared:

"All of you will be deported, including those that refuse to leave the prison; you will be informed of further details."

Indeed, on the same day Chistiakov arrived. He showed us a copy and the original of the "verdict" with Yagoda's signature. The verdict contained more than 25 provisos. We were asked to sign this document, but sick as we were, we expressly declined to do it. We could not agree to the clause providing for *gradual* release, which was to take place only two or three days prior to the deportation. Nor could we agree to the pledge that upon release we would not conduct any party work or that we would refrain from meeting our friends in the movement.

We wrote a letter of protest, setting forth our minimum demands. We demanded: 1) The four comrades who were released from the prison by an order of the Che-Ka but who, impelled by a sense of solidarity remained in prison continuing the hunger strike, should be allowed to stay in Russia. 2) The young comrades be left in

Russia. 3) The immediate release of the entire collective and granting its members the right to live in Russia not less than three weeks and 4) to delete the proviso touching collective assurance and the pledge not to meet "comrades in ideas."

Chistiakov left carrying with him our declaration.

A few days later the prison was visited by the Chief of the Foreign Section of the all-Russian Che-Ka, Mogilevsky*) who was placed in charge of our case. He said that we would be given a chance to leave the country under conditions, which in point of comfort would not differ from those afforded to members of the Comintern. But no sooner did we touch upon our demands, the Che-Ka representative would become evasive, declaring that it was not within his power to pass upon those matters and that it will be taken up, at his suggestion, by the Che-Ka board. We saw him, however, only three times after which he completely vanished out of our sight.

We did, however, obtain the release of comrades Guyevsky, Shilkin and Sheroshevsky; Fiedorov preferred to be placed on the deportation list.

We also obtained the annulment of the proviso of collective pledge "not to meet the friends in the movement."

A month passed since the hunger strike had been ended, but we were still kept in prison. The joy afforded by our victory gave place to disquietude, doubts and the drabness of the daily prison life. The hoilday spirit induced by the struggle was at an end.

Time went on and we were still kept in prison. Our nerves were getting on the blink. The Che-Ka was putting on the brakes: it promised the Profintern to have us released immediately, but it kept us in pprison.

By now the delegates, with the exception of Laval, left for their respective countries whereupon the Che-Ka began to act as if nothing had happened. Rumors began to circulate to the effect that the Anarchists would not be deported but left in prison, that the political prisoners of the Taganka prison would be dispersed throughout the other prisons of the country, etc. Our nerves became taut, nearing the breaking point. The atmosphere created in the collective as a result of all this was nearly impossible: everyone was nervous, irate, pessimism and dejection were the prevailing mood of all.

*) Lost his life in Caucasia.

Suddenly, on September 1, the prison authorities, accompanied by big-ranking officials of the Che-Ka, came into our cell, declaring:

"All the political prisoners, with the exception of the Anarchists, will be transferred to the Butirsky prison."

There followed a brief period of negotiations after which all the prisoners were taken away. We felt like orphans. The ten of us roamed the vast, deserted corridor.

A few days passed and still not a word from the Che-Ka. The regime became more and more rigorous. We showed resistance. It finally came to a pass: we were deprived of the right to speak directly to our visitors. Visitors were placed behind a double row of grates and only in such a manner were we allowed to have any visitors at all, that is, we were reduced to the position of ordinary criminals.

On Saturday, September 5, we decided to publicly manifest our protest. No sooner were our wives brought into the visitors room than we forced open all the gates, which immediately caused a great rumpus. Our wives were ousted roughly.

A call was sent out for the soldiers on guard. Soon the latter showed up in the yard, running toward the visitors room, loading their rifles on the way. The triggers were all cocked. . . . Just a trifle longer and the rifles would be in action. . . . But our calm attitude saved the situation from a bloody climax. We explained to the soldiers the entire situation, asking them to leave, since we also intended to leave for our cell. The soldiers left, while we returned to our cell, carrying the grates upon our shoulders and accompanied by the plaudits of the entire prison. Soon Chistiakov arrived and our representatives were called in to report on the whole matter. He left, promising that everything would be straightened out. Try hard, however, as the Che-Ka did, in order to capitalize on this outbreak, it failed in its attempt to frustrate our release. After two more agonizing weeks of prison confinement, we were at last set free on September 17, with the only condition imposed upon us: that of a written pledge to refrain from party work during the forthcoming interim.

VIII

WE ARE DEPORTED

We are free, and are among our closest friends. . . . Patiently we await the day of our banishment. But time goes on. We are not

permitted to work anywhere. Our means gave out; we sold everything we could in order to hold out. The State aid is miserably small, it suffices for two or three days and no more; in addition, we do not want that aid. Our wives are also unemployed, having given up their positions in order to share our banishment. The constant visitations to the Che-Ka were of little comfort to us.

"Your documents are not ready"—was the invariable answer to our anxious inquiries as to when we were going to be deported.

October is the date set for our departure and we begin bustling: we cover the city trying to see our friends and take leave of them; we begin packing and preparing for the long journey, and then on the following day the Che-Kists tell us with a smirk:

"You won't leave today, your departure is set for such and such a date."

This happened about five times. We gave up this business of taking leave of our friends in order not to make a laughing stock of ourselves.

Finally, we were told that on November 2, we shall definitely be sent to Petrograd. Somehow, we believed this promise. Comrade Marcus (member of the Executive Bureau of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation) invited his friends from the Bureau and some of his prison cellmates to a small tea party. In the evening all the invited guests gathered in his place. Time glided on, fleeting by imperceptibly in the midst of friendly conversations, seasoned with the well-baked pies prepared for this occasion. At 11 o'clock Yartchuk and Maximoff rose from the table, having in mind to pay their last visit to Emma Goldman, to discuss with her the forthcoming work abroad, connections and other matters. Both took leave from the host, leaving the rest to spend another half an hour, which they felt they owed to the genial host.

Upon returning home late at night, Maximoff failed to find his wife and the friends whom he left at the party in the apartment of Marcus. Their long absence kept him wondering. The clock struck three and they were still away.

"Something is wrong here, the Che-Ka is showing its hand," Maximoff thought to himself.

On the following day, early in the morning, both, Maximoff and Yartchuk, went over to Marcus in order to find out what was the matter. Fearing an ambush on the part of the Che-Ka agents,

the decided that only one of them go upstairs, the other one to remain on the street to watch developments.

The one that went up to the apartment knocked at the door. Having learned that there weren't any Che-Ka agents in the apartment, he called up his friend waiting at the street. Upon entering the apartment, they found everything in a topsy-turvy state.

"What happened?"

"Only half an hour after you had left," we were told by the wife of Marcus, "the Che-Ka agents swooped down upon us, searched everyone and then shoving everyone of us into one room, they made a systematic search of the entire apartment. Nothing was found. They were going to leave, taking only Marcus along with them, but, having called up the central office of the Che-Ka, they received instructions to arrest everyone present at that gathering, which, according to the Che-Ka agent, was viewed 'as a political rally,' all participants of which were to be arrested except the wife of Marcus, and that because she has small children in the house."

The indignantly aroused Maximoff went over to the Che-Ka's main office and lodged a written protest.

"Don't let yourself be upset," he was told there, "it is only a trifle. . . . Not all of you are going to leave today—only Volin, Yartchuk and Vorobiev are leaving. . . . Your wife will be released today."

"But why my wife only?. . . . There was also her sister who kept aloof from any sort of political activity. There are Gogelia (Orgeiani), L. and N. Chekeres—all of whom are my friends. . . . I demand that all of them, Marcus included, be released."

"I can only promise as far as your wife is concerned," said the Che-Ka official. And then turning to Volin he said: "Volin, get ready, you leave at three o'clock. . . ."

On that very night a wave of arrests swept throughout the country. In Moscow the organization of Anarchists-universalists was broken up and a number of comrades arrested. On the same night more than twenty Anarchists were arrested. The same thing took place in Petrograd.

Later on some of the arrested comrades were released, including comrade Marcus who declared a hunger strike, which lasted eleven days. The others were still held in the prisons. . . .

Two weeks later, the group of deported Anarchists left. In Moscow

they were told that their passports were ready and that all of them were to leave for Petrograd on the fifteenth.

Farewell Russia! Farewell Moscow, with its prisons and executioners who are now buried under the accompaniment of the "Internationale",*) with its horrible dungeons where the blood of its victims, both revolutionists and counter-revolutionists, never dry, with its dungeons whose walls are stained with the blood of our comrades: Fanya Baron and Lev Cherny tortured to death by the Che-Ka executionists! . . . Farewell, Ghenghis-Khan-like Communism: more than ever we remain your inveterate enemies!

In Petrograd we were accomodated in one of the best hotels.

And then a new chapter in our trials and tribulations began.

The hotel "Spartak" was in charge of the foreign Commissariat. We were kept up by the State. Our dinners were served in the hotel "International" which belonged to the same Commissariat. All of us, however, were in a state of high tension since for all practical purposes we were but prisoners, confined in a convenient, comfortable jail.

At last Yartchuk and then Volin were shipped out. Well, we thought, the thing is moving along. Soon we shall go too. . . . Yartchuk will come just in time to take part in the Anarchist convention which we were eager to attend and which we hoped to make in time.

Thus, at least, we were inclined to think. But the Che-Ka thought otherwise. After the departure of those two comrades the Che-Kists kept up the same bland tone and appearance: they did not deny

*) Here is an instance told to us by one of the outstanding political figures of revolutionary Russia, whose name we are not at liberty to reveal.

One of the Che-Ka executioners, Yemelianov, became deranged. He was placed in a well equipped hospital maintained by the Che-Ka. Everything possible was done to save the patient. The latter would jump up at the appearance of the nurse or anyone else, would twist the quilt into a semblance of a revolver and begin shouting: "Stand up against the wall!"—after which he would invariably start aiming at the person. . . .

Medical science did not help—the executioner died. It was difficult to save "a man" who was celebrating the memorable date which brought up the list of people executed by him to 1,000 persons.

Yemelianov was buried with honor: a guard of honor, music. . . . Under the accompaniment of the funeral march ("You fell as a victim in the fateful struggle") and the "International," the body of the executioner was turned over to the earth. The earth accepts everything! But there were plenty of candidates to take his place: now there are even women among the executioners. . . .

our requests, were inquiring about our health, whether the food was good or whether we felt comfortable in the "Spartak" hotel, etc.

Yes, we replied, but we were quite willing to live in worse conditions, only at the other side of the border.

"Take your time, comrades," we were told. "Is it we who keep you back? We have no documents for you. Moscow, as if doing so by design, sent documents that would be of no use in your case: the old passports of the Tzar's times. But how can we send you out with such documents? You will be arrested abroad." "And so we wait with such documents? You will be arrested-abroad." And so we wait again. At last the awaited moment arrived.

"You are going," the Che-Ka agents told us, "as Czecho-Slovaks, under such and such names. You don't need any documents. You will simply be placed on the list of the echelon."

A truck took us to the railroad station. It turned out, however, that the echelon was not ready yet, in view of which we were put up for the time being in barracks. There, we got a good idea of the barrack life as well as of the conditions under which we would have to journey. The results of such a voyage were clear to us beforehand: typhus or prison, or both together. We refused to go under those conditions. And so back we went to the hotel. On the following day we handed in a written protest in which we reminded the government of its pledges given to the Profintern delegates.

And again the wearisome days dragged on. December was nearly gone. We gave up the hopes of being in time for the Anarchist convention. Our friends with whom we worked out plans of activity abroad, since we were supposed to have left before them, were already at the other side, knocking at the gates of unfriendly Germany, which thus far kept them closely shut. Other thoughts already occupied our mind: what sort of prison is awaiting us.

However, our gloomy fears seemed to have been dispelled for the time being.

"Within a few days those that have children, that is, Gorelik and Fiedorov, will be sent by steamer," we were told by the Che-Ka. "They will be given a certificate with a German visa. The rest will leave three or four days later and will be furnished with the same kind of documents."

But when everything was set for this promised departure, it turned out that for some reason we could not go.

And so again day after day of tedious waiting. Fears and suspicions grew again within us.

Our plans of revolutionary work went to pieces. . . . Prison was facing us again. . . . We were pained and grieved over the shattered hopes with which we lived for such a long time.

Our persistent inquiries at the Petrograd Che-Ka were met with replies which sounded like apologies.

"We cannot do anything. Let Moscow do. . . . She is hampering the work. . . . We ourselves demanded that in view of the situation they take you back and ship you out themselves, or that they send good documents with which we might get you out."

"But what are we to do?" we asked them. "This business of being kept up by you at the expense of the State goes against our grain."

"Well, we shall have to ask Moscow again."

"Put an end to this rigmarole," we told them. "You decided to deport us; well do so. You want to put us in prison, go ahead. . . . Only don't keep dragging it out. . . ."

On December 25, one of the Che-Ka agents called on us, declaring in a rather authoritative tone: "Get your things ready. At seven o'clock in the evening you go to Moscow. . . . I am going to get your tickets for the express."

"But why to Moscow? Why?"

"I do not know. . . . I do not know anything. . . . Neymark came from Moscow and brought this order."

"But, how is it you don't know anything about it? Aren't you the Head of the Foreign Department? . . ."

"I am only carrying out orders. . . . I have no time to discuss it. . . ." And he vanished behind the door.

In the evening he came back together with another Che-Ka agent who was to escort us to Moscow.

"We are not going to leave for God knows where," we told the Che-Kists: "We demand Neymark here to explain what's what."

"The express is leaving soon. . . . If you don't take the express, you shall have to leave with the freight train. Whichever way, but go you must, and today at that. If necessary, we will use force in putting you on the train."

"So that means we are arrested?"

"Whether you are or not is none of our concern. We are instructed to send you out to Moscow and that is all."

After a brief conference held among ourselves we decided to leave.

Hastily our belongings were loaded into the automobile which took us over to the station.

At the station our belongings were just as hurriedly unloaded and taken over to the platform, but no sooner was the last suitcase brought over than the train left.

And thus we were left alone on the platform with our belongings piled up in front of us, with the children crying and the Che-Ka agents giving vent to their feelings in abuse and vituperations. It was decided to send us out the following day and to take us back to the hotel for the night. So we left our things in the baggage room in order to save ourselves the painful job of packing and unpacking. But again we were stuck: the automobile left. To walk back was a sheer impossibility since we had women and infants in our party. The Che-Ka agents went out to obtain an automobile. Some of us set out to walk toward the hotel. On the way we stopped over at some of our friends' places, trying to warn them of the fact that we are being taken back to Moscow and that the impression gained by us was that of being taken back to prison. To our great chagrin, none of our friends were at home.

Two hours after we had come back to the hotel, the Che-Ka agents were again after us.

"Get ready now. You are going today after all. A mail train is leaving soon."

It was no use to protest. We left. The conditions under which we traveled were terrible. It took us fifty-eight hours to reach Moscow. We arrived there on New Year's Eve (1922).

Were we going to be taken to the Che-Ka? And if not, where were we headed? Our escort did not say a word. The truck came and we were taken away.

"In the place I am taking you to," we were told by the Che-Ka agent, "You are not supposed to be known as Anarchists. . . ."

Ah, we thought to ourselves, it is not the prison that we were being taken to. But where?

Back and forth we went from one place to another, from the all-Russian Che-Ka to the Zemlianoi Val,^{*)} where the Che-Ka agent was fumbling for an address, and then back to the old places. Finally we came to a narrow lane where we stopped near a house (afterwards we found out that this place housed the Federation of War Prisoners). The Che-Ka agent went into the house, telling us to wait for him. He came out shortly and ordered the chauffeur to drive us

^{*)} Zemlianoj Val — a section in Moscow.

back to the Zemliany Vall. We were brought to a house where the German and Austrian war prisoners were quartered.

"Take off your things."

Our baggage was unloaded.

"I am through with my task; from now on you will have someone else who will tell you what to do. . . . "Good-by. . . ." Our escort left us.

Bewildered, we stood near our piled up baggage; stared at by the curious war prisoners.

"Sprechen Sie Deutch?" asked one of the moustached Germans.

There was no answer. We look at each other bewilderedly.

"Sprechen Sie Deutch?" the question was reiterated!

"Ja, Ja," one of us answered.

"Zimmer numer vier. . . ."

The baggage was carried into the next room. Soon we learned that we were no more Anarchists but civil prisoners, Czecho-Slovaks and that on January 3, (1922), we were going to leave with the party. There we also learned that the echelon was supposed to have left today but that it was detained on our account.

Now we came to realize whence the haste in shipping us out from Petrograd. We were to be relayed from the train to this party of war-prisoners and then sent away immediately as to make it impossible for us to refuse it. We were hungry, filthy and tired after the long journey. Those of us who had nowhere else to go remained in this bug-ridden place, the rest left for their friends' houses.

A short while before we had to leave we were told our new names, furnished with the very bad documents and together with the other members of the echelon we were placed on the train consisting of filthy freight cars, having wooden bedplanks on both sides and an iron stove in the center.

IX

WE START OUT

For two days we lived in these freight cars before starting out on the morning of January 5. The voyage was distressingly hard, especially for the children. The poor children suffered from intolerable heat or from cold. Their lives were in danger from the awful draughts. One of the children fell sick; he began to utter hoarse cries which gradually died away into feeble groans.

There was Sebezh. . . . Then came Latvia. Our documents were

examined, the baggage was looked over; which was followed by a personal search. As far as we were concerned, everything ended well, although here and there incidents occurred: an attempt was made to take away books and money from some of us. The search having ended, we started out again. A few miles further the train stopped. The border. . . .

“Get your documents ready, citizens! Throw everything out of the cars!” And so the wood boards and the stoves with the burning wood were flung out of the cars. . . . The documents were examined, the party left. . . .

Latvia! We are changing into other cars. The Letts put the passengers of two Russian cars, into one Latvian car. There we were served with a supper and furnished with wood. Soon the train left. On the way we discover that the sick child died; it died quietly, without undue trouble. At the first Latvian station, on a dark night, the grief-stricken mother turned over the little corpse of her firstling to the station morgue. The Fiedorovs lost their child.

And now we are in the quarantine of the city of Riga. There we were kept as prisoners; we were not permitted to leave the premises. It was a cold, filthy place and in addition, we were kept on starvation rations.

Litva, Germany; changing to passenger trains! Poland and then Germany again. . . .

We were faced with the problem: how to get to Berlin, our destination? To get away from the party before it gets to Stettin—that we did not succeed in carrying out. We decided to make our escape from Stettin. But there was Stettin itself. . . .

Will the planned escape succeed? . . .

X

STETTIN PRISON. WE ARE NO MORE CZECHS.

With the train drawing nearer to Stettin, we changed clothes, and put ourselves into a more dignified shape. We began to look like Europeans. Our things were all packed away in the trunks. Our plan was to hire a porter and have him stow away our things in a baggage room, while we ourselves would leave immediately for Berlin. In an emergency we were ready to abandon our things and get away.

However, the echelon did not land at the station; it was shunted off near the barracks. Guards were mounted at the car entrances and orders were given to carry the baggage out. This done, we were broken up into various national groups and were ordered to take our things into the barracks. The echelon was met by numerous representatives of the Red Cross who were also acting in the capacity of detectives. . . . No sooner did we settle in the barracks than two of those "gentlemen" came in, ordering comrade Maximoff to follow them. He was searched, given a few whacks, and then peremptorily told to "confess".

"Tell us the truth," the Red Cross representative kept on shouting. "Where are your belongings, your baggage?"

They came to the barracks for the baggage. There they arrested Maximoff's wife and placed both of them under guard. Soon Mark and the rest were fetched to the same place.

"Bolsheviks, Bolsheviks," the detectives kept on saying joyfully while going on with their painstaking search.

In the evening a horse and wagon were brought over to our place. The baggage was put upon the wagon and the women were put upon the piled up baggage. Since there was no room for all of us, two had to walk their way, escorted by an armed guard. The sergeant in charge of the convoy gave orders to beat us at the first attempt to escape.

We decided to reveal our identity in case we were put in prison. We preferred to be known as Anarchists and not as Bolsheviks. It would, indeed, be ironic to be imprisoned as Bolsheviks!

We revealed our identity. . . .

Some believed us, others did not. We were put in the jail of the "Politzei Presidium", but the women were permitted to stay in a nearby hotel, provided they show up every morning. . . .

Everything seemed to have been lost. . . . In the "Politzei Presidium" one could only hear:

"Bolsheviks! . . . Zuruck nach Russland!" . . .

On the following day we declared that we preferred to be sent to the Zulus in Africa rather than go back to Russia.

"All right, we will send you to Czecho-Slovakia, but here you cannot remain."

"But we are not Czechs. . . ."

"You have Czecho-Slovakian documents. We shall make believe you are Czechs. Otherwise you will have to go back to Russia."

Back to Russia—prison! Go to Czecho-Slovakia—prison again!
And then? . . .

And then some other prison.

What a consoling thought! Everything is lost. . . .

While yet in Russia, confined in Taganka prison, it was decided that we go to Berlin, where there was a strong and healthy Anarcho-Syndicalist movement, and to launch upon a concerted work for Russia, acting as the foreign Bureau of the Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation. We thought a great deal about this plan. We had in mind to publish a paper for Russia, and also propagandistic and agitational literature, that is, to continue, without stopping, the work interrupted by the Bolsheviks. We hoped that with the material and moral assistance of German, French, American and other comrades we should be able to set up a publication in one or several European languages where the truth about the Russian revolution would be told, where one could share one's revolutionary experience and a series of problems brought forward by the revolution in Russia, and where one might appeal for the organization of an Anarcho-Syndicalist International, the organization of a Syndicalist International based upon the principles of Bakuninism, of the First International, etc.

And suddenly all that went astray, irretrievably lost. . . .

How distressing, how painful!

It was sheer joy then to have been told that we were going to be released from prison and placed under the surveillance of the police, having been warned, though, that at the first opportunity we shall have to be sent to Czecho-Slovakia.

We felt joyful, for now we obtained freedom of action: we could communicate with our Berlin friends whose joint efforts would snatch us from the clutches of the German police.

And we were not deceived in our hopes. . . .

February 7, 1922.

G. MAXIMOFF.

TROTZKY'S REPLY

*To Com. Michel and to the other comrades who composed the
delegation which visited yesterday Com. Lenin:*

Dear Comrades:

The Central Committee of our Party has again, this morning, examined with due care the question of the imprisoned Anarchists which was called for in your yesterday's talk with Lenin.

We are fully aware of the necessity of being exceedingly careful in our handling the question of imprisoned Anarchists. The more is this necessary that the Western European Anarcho-Syndicalists, among them being those who play a very important and positive role in the revolutionary movement, do not always make the necessary differentiation between the Anarchists and Syndicalists who, while preserving the peculiarities of their opinions, consider it, nonetheless, as their revolutionary duty to support the dictatorship of the Russian proletariat against the world bourgeoisie—and those who, sheltering themselves behind an extreme revolutionary phraseology, carry out, in fact, a counter-revolutionary activity, dealing blows from behind to the Soviet Power, at a time when the latter is turned with its face to the imperialist enemies.

The fact that Anarchists, who have exterminated, helped to exterminate or advised to exterminate Communists, are hunger-striking in prison can, in no way—you will agree—serve as a pretext for their release. In the meantime those prisoners whom, as you know, we have found possible, at considerable risk, to release, refuse to go out of prison and continue their hunger-strike, demanding the release of the others. We have no right whatever to expose the lives of fresh dozens and, perhaps, hundreds of Communist workers and peasants, a large number of whom have already fallen into the hands of the anti-Soviet Anarchist organization in which the imprisoned Anarchists were active. We consider it necessary to remind you again that the Communists who fall into the hands of that organization have no opportunity either to make any protests or to get into touch with delegates to International Congresses, or even to declare hunger-strikes—because they are immediately and mercilessly exterminated.*)

The hunger-strike is actually kept up by the false hope that the Soviet Government will, under the influence of the intervention of insufficiently informed foreign delegates, commit the error, approaching to a crime, and release its irreconcilable enemies, whose closest partisans and friends still continue by force of arms to destroy Soviet institutions and to exterminate Communists. As we cannot, fully conscious of our duties towards the revolution, take such a step, any *interview* of the foreign comrades with the prisoners which could not, because of the nature of the situation, give any practical results,

*) He doubtless refers to the Makhno rebels whom Anarchists were accused of supporting.

would be capable, however, of raising, among the prisoners, false hopes and of inducing them to continue a hopeless hunger-strike.

Free from any spirit of revenge, considerations of revolutionary expediency alone dictating our steps, we would be willing to let all the prisoners go abroad, facilitating their departure by providing them with passports and financial means, and we are ready to accept, in this direction, any help, assistance and indications which you might give us.

We consider, nevertheless, that the only right step on your part would be a written declaration on your part appealing to the prisoners to cease immediately their hunger-strike, considering the manifest discrepancy between the means and the aim. Such letter would be immediately transmitted to the prisoners.

We do not wish to doubt that you will understand the actual sense and spirit of our answer and of our propositions. We still consider ourselves a revolutionary fortress, besieged by the world imperialism. Within this fortress no treason, treachery or counter-revolutionary rebellion can be permitted by us. The welfare of the revolution is our supreme law. This law takes sometimes a stern form. The advance-guard of the workmen of Europe and of the whole world will only then triumph over the bourgeoisie when they will learn to place the stern law of revolutionary expediency above all other consideration.

With comradely greetings,

L. TROTSKY.

12-7-1921.

AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMMITTEE OF THE
FOREIGN DELEGATES AND THE BOLSHEVIK
GOVERNMENT.*)

Comrades, in view of the fact that we have come to the conclusion that your hunger-strike cannot accomplish your liberation, we hereby advise you to terminate it.

At the same time we inform you that definite proposals have been made to us by Comrade Lunacharsky, in the name of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. To wit:

1. All Anarchists held in the prisons of Russia, and who are now

*) This agreement supposed to be sent to the prisoners, but we never received it.

on a hunger-strike, will be permitted to leave for any country they may choose. They will be supplied with passports and funds.

2. Concerning other imprisoned Anarchists or those out of prison, final action will be taken by the Party tomorrow. It is the opinion of Comrade Lunacharsky that the decision in their case will be similar to the present one.

3. We have received the promise indorsed by Unschlicht, that the families of the comrades to go abroad will be permitted to follow them if they wish. For conspirative reasons some time will have to elapse before this is done.

4. The comrades going abroad will be permitted two or three days at liberty before their departure, to enable them to arrange their affairs.

5. They will not be allowed to return to Russia without the consent of the Soviet Government.

6. Most of these conditions are contained in the letter received by this delegation from the Central Committee of the Communist Party, signed by Trotzky.

7. The foreign comrades have been authorized to see to it that these conditions are properly carried out.

(Signatures)

Orlandis, Leval—Spain
Sirolle, Michel—France
A. Shapiro—Russia

The above is correct.

(Signed) Lunacharsky.

Kremlin, Moscow,
13. VII. 1921.

Alexander Berkman declines to sign because

- a. he is opposed to deportation on principle;
- b. he considers the letter an arbitrary and unjustified curtailment of the original offer of the Central Committee, according to which all the Anarchists were to be permitted to leave Russia;
- c. he demands more time at liberty for those to be released, to enable them to recuperate before deportation.*)

*) This document was published by Alexander Berkman in his book: "The Bolshevik Myth (Diary 1920-1922)", pp. 315-317; Published, Boni and Live-right, 1925, New York.

A RAY OF LIGHT FROM MOSCOW

At the Moscow conference of the delegates to the Congress of Red Trade Unions (it took place July 22, 1921) at which the opposition of this congress was organized, Trotzky, during one of the sessions of this conference, said the following:

“. . . All Anarchists (Russian, of course) are rascals and criminals. None of those who at present are kept in prison can be set at liberty.”

LEVAL: (Delegate of the Spanish National Confederation of Labor—C. N. T.). Asks that this statement be substantiated by proofs.

TROTZKY: “And who are you, Leval? I do not find it necessary to answer you.”

When Orlandis (also a delegate of the Spanish C. N. T.) in turn also demanded proofs to corroborate the above sited statements, Trotzky answered: “You give me the impression of a hysterical woman, I am the People’s Commisar and find it superfluous to give you any explanations. My word is sufficient. The delegates to the International Trade Union Congress have no right to demand freedom for those counter-revolutionary bandits. We are responsible for our action right here in Russia. And we, who are in power here, act in the interests of the revolution. . . .”

(From “*Der Syndicalist*,” No. 32, 1921, Berlin).

THE PERSECUTION OF THE ANARCHISTS UNIVERSALISTS

Dear Comrades!

On the night of November 1, the headquarters of the All-Russian Section of the Anarchists-Universalists were wrecked, and most of the members of the secretariat (Askarov, Shapiro, Simchin and the previously detained Barmash and Stitzenko) were arrested. None of us know the reasons for those arrests. But a few weeks ago some of the members of our organization, when questioned by the Che-Ka were told that our organization on the whole and a few individual comrades were charged with the following: 1) banditism, 2) keeping the escape of prisoners from the Riazan prison, 3) close relations

with the escape prisoners from the Riazan prison, 4) close relations with the Makhno robber bands, and 5) selling and using counterfeit money.

The Che-Ka investigator Chistiakov, when examining Comrade Stitzenko, declared that the All-Russian Che-Ka, basing itself upon the testimony given by Cherny and Gavrilov (both were shot afterwards) charged us with conducting illegal meetings on the premises of the All-Russian Section of Anarchists-Universalists. Such meetings were allegedly conducted with the knowledge of the secretariat of the organization. We were also charged, on the basis of alleged testimony of Jean Altshuler, with furnishing false documents to the prisoners who escaped from the Riazan prison.

We reject all those charges as being false and libelous.

Comrades! We are very much astounded by those accusations; we lack words to express our indignation concerning such charges.

In the annals of the Russian Anarchist movement this frameup constitutes in itself a most monstrous, egregious case

Comrade Ascarov (an old Anarchist who had been in the movement for about seventeen years), and we, members of the secretariat, declare to all of you that the secretariat of the All-Russian Section of the Anarchists-Universalists during its entire period of existence, never has maintained any relations with hold-up men, with illegal organizations or partisans of the Makhno movement. We have never furnished any organizations or group of persons with any documents. The secretariat does not know where these hold-up men or illegal organizations ever gathered, we know absolutely nothing about their plans or intentions. We pledge our Anarchist honor to warrant the truth of our statements. We declare that any testimony to the contrary given by anyone constitutes an absolute lie.

Comrades! You must understand our situation. We are helpless in the defense of the name and honor of Anarchism, for we are in prison. We have only one weapon at our disposal and that is the hunger strike. We intend to make use of this weapon, but it would be premature to fall back upon it before we have the chance of informing you about all these falsehoods. The honor of Anarchism is at stake now, the honor of Lev Cherny, an Anarchist thinker. It should be immediately ascertained whether Lev Cherny or some one else did make such depositions as it was stated by the Che-Ka investigator Chistiakov, or was this but a sheer provocation, in

which case the name of those who issue such statements should be piloried before the proletarian opinion of the world. We expect that you comrades will demand that the Che-Ka show proof that such testimony was actually given

Comrades! The memory of Ferrer's tragedy is still fresh with us and we cannot think that Soviet Russia will follow in the footsteps of Jesuite Spain. But this concerns the honor of Russian Anarchism. Let this outrage triumph, and not a single Anarchist can have the assurance that he will not share our fate.

Do not delay! We serenely await our fate. If you cannot denounce this shameless outrage, then nothing remains for us but to declare a hunger strike and fight it out until our very death.

ASKAROV, SIMCHIN,
STITZENKO.

November 26, 1921
Inner Prison of the
All-Russian Che-Ka.

COMPENDIUM

Bolshevism in the Light of the Deported Anarchists

THE APPEAL OF THE FOREIGN BUREAU FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE RUSSIAN ANARCHO- SYNDICALIST CONFEDERATION

*To the International Revolutionary Proletariat and the Anarchist
Organizations of the world*

Dear comrades:

Now that the waves of the Communist reaction raging in Russia, and surpassing in its violence the terrorist methods of the Spanish bourgeoisie, has cast us upon the inhospitable shores of the Social-Democratic Germany, we hold it our duty to set forth the state of affairs prevailing in Russia and we appeal to you to help us in our struggle: for our struggle is your struggle, our aims are your aims, *our victory is your victory.*

The Revolution is dead, long live the Revolution!

The great Russian revolution has been strangled, its spirit has been killed. The starving masses of toilers, worn out by the old and new economic experiments of the Bolsheviki have become disillusioned and they do not see their way out.

Basing itself upon the regimented army, a ruthless police force, a net of Che-Ka departments, with their torture chambers and three hundred thousand Communists armed to their teeth, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party succeeded with the help of unheard of cruelties to enslave the proletariat and peasantry in the name of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

Every attempt to get rid of the Habdul-Hamid like Marxist reaction and of the yoke of the Communist party is brutally suppressed by military force. The Communist party does not stop before mass executions when it has to quell the outbreaks of well warranted rebellion on the part of revolutionary workers, peasants, and sailors. Not a few villages in Central Russia, the Volga district and Ukraine have been wiped out by Trotzky's artillery. Not a few workers and sailors were shot for their participation in the "counter-revolutionary" uprising in Kronstadt. Prisons, concentration camps and

the Che-Ka jails, now dotting the boundless expanses of "Soviet" Russia, are overcrowded with Anarchists, Left Socialists and non-partisan workers. Not a few of them have been exiled to the wild parts of the remote and starving provinces of the North.

However, torture chambers and executions are of no avail, the propaganda of Social Revolution is kept on, the propaganda of the Anarcho-Syndicalist ideas is not lost upon the population. In the Ural provinces, in Central Russia, in Ukraine, Anarchist and Anarcho-Syndicalist organizations are set up anew and continue to grow. Among the toilers of the cities and villages there is an ever growing interest toward our words, toward our conception of the stateless and federalist socialism, of the ways and means of consolidating the social revolution.

The proletarian youth reads avidly the works of Malatesta, Bakunin, and Kropotkin, whose books have not yet been exempted by the vigilant eyes of the Che-Ka. But new problems are coming to the fore, the new economic policy (NEP) has come to stay, thousands of workers are given up to slavery by the "government of workers and peasants" to the foreign and native capitalists. The Radeks, Krasins and Rakovskys are paying humble visits to Poincare and Lloyd George, at the same time calling upon the international proletariat to create a united front with Noske, Scheidemann and other reformists. Revolutionary Russia which is now languishing in the prison of Communist dictatorship, is thirsting for a living Anarchist work, is waiting for a powerful call to organize and begin the struggle anew.

Besides, you know that the ruinous mirage of the Communist International still sways the minds of many European and American workers. Unprincipled demogogy and Moscow subsidies serve as powerful tools in the hands of bought and ambitious "leaders" in misleading the masses of people.

We, the group of Anarcho-Syndicalists exiled by the Central Committee of the Communist party, underwrote the obligation before the Social Revolution, before the workers and peasants of Russia, before comrades who were left in the prisons of the "Communist Party," not to relax in our struggle for the economic and spiritual freedom, for the Anarchist Commune.

Our duty is to call upon the enslaved toilers of Russia to organize their forces for "the last and decisive" battle, to enlighten workers, peasants, teachers, to put our ideas within the reach of the

youth. We must place our efforts in behalf of the struggle against the knouto-communist regime*) now foisted upon the country as the successor of the decayed capitalist order.

Your duty, comrades, is to come to our aid in the setting up of a free Anarchist press, the aim of which would be to struggle against red reaction and to adumbrate the main phases of the coming anti-authoritarian revolution.

In extending us moral and material aid in our difficult and responsible work you will give the most adequate expression to your indignation against the intolerable dictatorship of the "socialist" state and also your vivid sympathies to the cause of the genuinely revolutionary Russia, the Russia of Bakunin and Kropotkin.

We are firmly convinced, comrades, that you will not turn a deaf ear to our appeal. Our aims are your aims, our struggle is your struggle. And like the Polish rebels used to say years ago: "We are fighting for our freedom as well as for yours."

With comradely greetings

The Foreign Bureau for the Organization of the
Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation.

G. MAXIMOFF

MARK

E. YARTCHUK

TO THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD

The frenzied terror of the deeply a-moral Communist party swept the country with the blood not only of White-Guardists but also of revolutionists: Anarchists, Syndicalists, Socialists, non-partisan workers and peasants.

The dread horrors of the most heinous and revolting terror unleashed by them exceeded anything of the kind in history.

What is Thier and Galife in comparison! What is the crushing of the Paris Commune compared with the mass terror of the Bolsheviks!

Remember the terror attending the crushing of the Anarchists in Moscow, in April 1918, the June (1918) massacre of the Left Social-Revolutionists in the same city; remember the quelling of the peasants of the Samara, Pensa and Saratov provinces who took up arms in

*) Knout — a whip.

1919 in defense of the free Soviets; remember the nightmarish, ghastly executions of workers in Astrakhan, in 1919; the terror attending the crushing of the revolutionary irregulars of Ukraine and finally—the crowning horror of all that—the Russian Paris Commune, the Red Kronstadt which revolted in the name of the slogans of the October Revolution. . . .

What are the hundreds of victims of Robespierre terror in comparison with the thousands of tortured and executed victims of the Che-Ka, which bears down not only upon its enemies from right and left but also upon innocent “hostages.”

We always fought against the revolting system of hostage taking; we always fought against capital punishment and the rampant spirit of lynch law.

The terror applied by the Bolsheviks toward Anarchists in the same measure as toward counter-revolutionists was not answered by us in kind, although we were entitled to it by the law of self-defense; we did not do it because we were guided by the interests of the revolution.

What brought forth this frenzied terror and the vile suppression of elementary civil rights? The situation created for the revolution by the international imperialism and inner counter-revolution? But government terror began prior to the open struggle with the imperialism of the Entente, before the inner counter-revolution had raised its head. If the terroristic policy was to defend the revolution, how is it that it fell with equal power upon enemies and friends?

No, the Bolshevik terror was and is the weapon of party domination. Nothing but that.

In the name of this domination most heinous crimes are perpetrated; in its name are slaughtered not only those that are caught fighting against the power with arms in their hands, but also parties, groups, workers, unions and individuals who have the courage and boldness to think for themselves, to speak against the course of the ruling party, to preach ideas and tactics differing from the latter; in the name of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” a dictatorship of the Party was established over the proletariat.

The persecution of heterodox opinion began in 1918 in the name of the “dictatorship of the proletariat” and led to the full annihilation not only of the right Socialist parties, groups, workers’ unions, but also of the entire left movement.

And in proportion to their numbers the ones that were most

strongly hit by those persecutions were the Anarchists, and that is notwithstanding their self-denying struggle against *Kornilov*, *Kaledin*, *Krasnov*, *Kolchak*, *Denikin*, *Yudenich*, *Wrangel* and the Entente troops in the North, South, East and West.

Anarchists were executed right and left. Some, like the worker Khodounov, were done away with for no cause at all, because of an "attempt to escape;" others, like Gordeyev, a worker from the Izhevsk mills, for failing to submit to "workers' discipline;" and still others for "banditism," like Fanya Baron and the theoretician of the "associationist Anarchism" Lev Cherny (Turchaninov) whom the chekists promised to set free but, having overstepped the limits in torturing Cherny, they shot him in order to cover up their heinous deed.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Anarchists were never declared outside the law, their organizations, with the exceptions of two, were broken up and their members imprisoned for no cause at all.

The campaign against Anarchism was at first waged under the slogan of "fighting against banditism," and that was in spite of the fact that all Anarchist organizations and groups opposed hold-ups of any sort as well as terroristic acts. And when provoked by the strangulating policy pursued by the Bolsheviki some Anarchists headed by the Left Social-Revolutionist Cherepanov did attempt to blow up the Moscow Committee of the Bolshevik Party, this act met the universal condemnation of all Anarchist organizations who publicly stated their opinion to that effect.

Following the stage of fighting the Anarchists as "bandits," there came the campaign against them as "Makhnovites." Anarchists were persecuted as such, that is for being active in the movement; and, finally, we have arrived at the stage where even pro-Bolshevik Anarchists who have not taken any active part in the movement are persecuted on the ground of having fallen short of the hopes placed in them as effective agents of the Communist policy.

Some Anarchists were executed; others driven out of Soviet Russia. A great number of Anarchists were exiled to the famished provinces of the North, doomed to certain death as a result of starvation and diseases. And those that are in prisons, in addition to all those terrors, are kept in constant threat of execution.

Alarming news is reaching us of the fate of our comrades: A. Baron, Olga Taratuta, Rode and others who have been kept in Communist prisons for more than two years; their lives are seriously endangered.

The Communists could not stage any trial of Anarchists as they did with the Social-Revolutionists; it is difficult to arraign Anarchists even on false indictments. Only a year ago the delegates of the Profintern convention demanded that the Communist party draw up charges against 62 Anarchists who were kept in various prisons of Soviet Russia. Such charges could not be formulated by Lenin, Trotzky or by the "head" of the Che-Ka — Dzerzhinsky. And because of that some Anarchists had to be released with the provision that they submit to being expelled from Soviet Russia. But outside of those exiled Anarchists there remained many more in prisons, apart from those that had been arrested after this intercession took place.

The latest news coming from Russia troubles us very deeply: the *Bolsheviks decided to kill off the Anarchists in prison.*

The Bolsheviks began to revert to direct murder of Anarchists who are kept in prisons; they do it without even the formality of passing sentences, by their "notorious" Che-Ka boards. One attempt of that kind already took place: Comrade Baron who was kept in the prison of Orel, was shot at while lying in his prison bed. This fact was attested by a member of the Central Committee of the Social-Democratic party (now exiled from Soviet Russia who had been kept in the same cell with A. Baron).

The situation of the Anarchists in the Communist prisons is quite desperate and if the protests of the international proletariat and the latter's demands to put an end to the unrestrained terror will not save our comrades from the clutches of the frenzied beasts,—many of them will not escape a violent and premature death.

We ardently appeal to the international proletariat and its organizations to unite its efforts and put an end to the unbridled terror of the Russian Communist party.

This has to be done in the name of the trampled Rights of Man, in order to rehabilitate the idea of proletarian emancipation, in order to humanize living conditions in Russia. In this matter there can be no differences of opinion: The universal cause of humanity effaces factional differences, and that is why we appeal to our political friends as well as enemies, hoping that factional enmity will not prevent anyone from raising his voice in defense of the martyrs of the Communist torture chambers.

We are confident that the united protest of the international proletariat will give our comrades life and freedom.

With comradely greetings
The Foreign Bureau for the Organization of the
Russian Anarcho-Syndicalist Confederation.

G. MAXIMOFF

MARK

YARTCHUK

APPEAL FOR HELP

Having now left Russia, we realize that our first and most necessary statements should be made in behalf of the political prisoners of Russia. It is a sad and heartbreaking commentary upon the state of affairs in Russia if one has to speak about political prisoners in the country of Social Revolution. Unfortunately such is the actual state of things.

And by political prisoners we do not refer to the counter-revolutionists who are the prisoners of the Revolution. Unbelievable as it may seem, the prisons and jails of Soviet Russia are now crowded with the revolutionary elements of the country: men and women of the highest caliber, of the highest social ideals and aspirations. Throughout the vast expanses of the country, in Central Russia and in Siberia, in the prisons of the old and new regime, in the solitary cells of the Che-Ka, revolutionists of all parties and movements are now languishing: Left Social-Revolutionists, Maximacists, Communists from the "workers' opposition," Anarchists, Anarcho-Syndicalists and Universalists — Partisans of various schools of social philosophy, but all true revolutionists and active participants of the November revolution of 1917. The situation of the political prisoners is highly deplorable. Apart from moral sufferings and torments, the purely physical side of their existence is extremely lamentable. Due to the general state of the country, the lack of building materials and skilled workers, alterations of prisons have become nearly nigh impossible. That is why the hygienic conditions in most of the prisons are now of the most primitive kind. But worse than all is the food problem. At no time did the Bolshevik government supply its prisoners with sufficient food. The rations given to prisoners fell upon their friends, relatives and comrades. But now the situation has taken a turn for the worse. Only 52 percent of the food tax collections have thus far been taken in. With famine

conditions now existing in the Volga provinces, with the general breakdown of the economic apparatus of the government, the situation of the prison population has indeed become hopeless.

The needs of the political prisoners are satisfied, of course, by the Political Red Cross, a faithful and active organization. One of the outstanding members of this organization is the old eminent revolutionist, Vera Figner. This organization was very successful in its mission considering how difficult it is for anyone to save anything from ones meagre ration. However, the Political Red Cross until now has been able to supply the most basic needs of the political prisoners. Of all the prisoners *with the exception of Anarchists!* Not because the Red Cross is discriminatory in its work. Just the opposite—the organization is non-partisan in its work, although strongly colored by the rightest convictions of the socialist elements. But, guided by political reasons, the Anarchists of Russia have always reverted to self-aid in the work of helping the imprisoned comrades, for the purpose of which an Anarchist Red Cross (now called the Black Cross) was set up with the aim of providing for the Anarchists in the Russian prisons. This now has become a Herculean task for the Anarchists who still happen to enjoy their freedom. Many of the most active comrades have given their life for the revolution, a vast number of them fell on the front defending the revolution, while others were executed or thrown into the Bolshevik prisons. Many of those who survived and are still at liberty are themselves on the very brink of starvation: the Black Cross has to make superhuman efforts to keep the political prisoners from starving to death. The work done by it is one of self-sacrifice and high nobility.

But if its work was always hard and full of obstacles it has now become immeasurably more difficult. The new policy of systematic persecutions of Anarchists by the Bolshevik government is the greatest obstacle in the work of the Black Cross. Since most of its members have been imprisoned by now, the organization was revamped and now it is known under the name of the Society to Aid the Anarchists in the Russian Prisons. It heroically continues the work of extending to the prisoners the small material aid which it succeeds in collecting. Unfortunately, its possibilities to do so are very limited. The comrades who are at liberty deprive themselves from the basic necessities in order to send a few pounds of bread or potatoes to the prisoners. They are eager to share the last they

have. But they themselves have so little, and the number of comrades in prison is so vast and their need so great! From the prisons of Moscow, Petrograd, Orel and Vladimir, from the far-off Eastern provinces, from the comrades exiled to the frozen North, from everywhere comes that frightful news: the terrible whip of famine, the dreadful scurvy. Their hands and feet swell up, their gums weaken, their teeth are falling out. . . . Their bodies are actually disintegrating.

Comrades who are at liberty, pay heed to this cry for help! The Anarchists in Russia cannot supply the barest needs of the imprisoned comrades unless helped in this work by comrades abroad. In the name of the Society to Aid Anarchists in Russian Prisons, in the name of our tortured comrades who freeze and starve to death in the Bolshevik prisons, who suffer now for their faithfulness to the highest ideals, in the name of all of them, we call upon you, comrades and friends, from everywhere. Only your voluntary and immediate aid will be able to save our imprisoned comrades of Russia from starving to death.

With comradely greetings,

ALEXANDER BERKMAN

Delegate at large from the

Society to Aid Anarchist Prisoners in Russia

EMMA GOLDMAN and A. SHAPIRO—Secretary
of Anarcho-Syndicalist Union "Golos Trouda."

III

The Dry Guillotine Begins to Work

1922 - 1939

A YEAR BY YEAR CHRONICLE OF ARRESTS,
PERSECUTIONS AND STRUGGLES OF
ANARCHISTS IN PRISONS AND EXILES.

1922

A NEW HUNGER STRIKE IN THE PRISON

Moscow—On January 15, 1922 the Anarchist fraction of the Butirskaya prison declared a hunger strike in solidarity with Comrade Cherniak who had been out on hunger strike for 11 days. Cherniak started the strike all by himself, demanding that he be freed or exiled abroad. On the sixth day Chistiakov, the investigator of the Che-Ka, appeared and declared that Cherniak could not be sent abroad since, according to the Che-Ka information, he had never lived in any foreign country. Nor could he be freed since there is serious "evidence" against him. Cherniak maintained that he had spent 11 years in America, where he was secretary of an Anarchist Federation, and that a number of witnesses, including two members of the Comintern Bureau could verify this fact. As to the serious evidence against him, Cherniak demanded a trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal, promising in return to give up the hunger strike.

January 14, on the tenth day of the hunger strike, the doctor who examined Cherniak stated that his jaw and tongue had swelled, his pulse was slowing down and that on the whole, his condition was serious. Late at night, Barmash, the elected representative of the Anarchist prisoners, succeeded in speaking to the All-Russian Che-Ka on the telephone. Their representative, Andreyeva, delegated by Unshlikht, repeated what Chistiakov had said, turning down Cherniak's demand for a trial, alleging that the evidence in Cherniak's case had not yet been checked up: Cherniak has been in prison for five months. Andreyeva placed the moral responsibility for the possible death of Cherniak upon the Anarchist fraction which, she said, should persuade Cherniak to give up the hunger strike.

On the night of January 15, a throng of Chekists, headed by Unshlikht and containing known executioners like Mago, Ivanov, and others, crowded into the prison. They threw a cordon around the prison, filled the corridors and steps of the building containing the solitary cells, and installed a guard of two near the cells occupied by the Anarchists. It did not come to an open fight only because Unshlikht agreed to negotiate with the representatives of the Anarchists, and guaranteed the following:

1. That the Anarchists would be transferred to the prison on

Kiselny lane where they would be placed, with respect of food and the general regime, in the same conditions as in the Butirky prison;

2. That no one would be taken out for exile or to another prison outside of Moscow without warm clothing;

3. That the verdict in the case of the Anarchists declared a few hours ago would be revised;

4. That Cherniak would be sent to the hospital. The demand that Unshlikht guarantee that no artificial feeding be forced upon Cherniak was refused on the ground that this matter belongs to the province of medicine.

The Anarchists pledged not to offer any resistance. They were all transferred without any untoward incidents. An attempt was also made to take Cherniak, who had already lost consciousness, to the prison on the Kiselny lane.

The "verdict" read to the Anarchists was typed on a plain sheet of paper. We give here a literal reproduction, retaining all the punctuation marks and the syntax of the original.

"In addition to the additional confinement No. 6586|1538, 1922, *January 14th the investigator of the Secret Department of the Moscow Che-Ka Yanson, to review again the resolution of December 20, 1921, on the case No. 6596|1538 (the case of the Anarchists)*

I suggest:

To propose to the board of the Moscow Che-Ka to select the Archangel provincial prison as the place of confinement for the citizens mentioned below who are a harmful element in regard to R. S. F. S. R. who set themselves the aim through organizations of illegal groups all over the republic—and showing sympathy toward such—having set themselves the aim of subverting the Soviet government:

1. Petrosova Maria Varshanovna
2. Krasavchik Fedor Artemovich
3. Markov Vasily Dmitrovich
4. Kurganskaya Apolina Arnoldovna
5. Volchenok Aron Korelevich.

According to the resolution of December 20th, 1921, the above mentioned citizens are to be subjected to imprisonment of five (5) years each.

Shkolnikova Isya Abramovna
Shapiro Ilya Isayevich
Karasik Alexander Moyseevich
Shapiro Rakhil Davidovna.

According to the resolution of December 20, 1921 the above referred to citizens are to be subjected to term of prison confinement of two years each.

In regard to the other citizens according to the resolution of Dec. 20th to keep them under guard in the local prisons.

The investigators of the Mos Che-Ka (signature unclear—perhaps Yanson)

The Deputy of the Mos Che-Ka
(Signature is lacking)

Agreed: head of the Secret Dept. of the Moscow Che-Ka
(Signature lacking)

Signed in addition
(Signature lacking).”

There was neither seal nor number on this document, but there were margin notes on it written with a colored pencil:

“1. To intensify the work of the secret agents during the campaign of elections to the Moscow soviet—especially in regard to the Mensheviks.

2. To shift the workers; Prokhorov was kept in the camp, Andreyev is keeping contact with the people’s Commissariat of Education.

3. Poluiektov.

4. To push forward the case of Goldman.”

The Anarchists refused to recognize this paper as an authorized verdict, referring to the lack of signatures and the very formulas employed—“I suggest,” “to propose” and a number of other irregularities. Among other things, for instance, there was no such a person as “D. Shkolnikova Isya Abramovna” among the prisoners; seemingly the verdict referred to Shkolnikov, Ilya Abramovich.

All of us were very much intrigued by the clause: “in regard to the other citizens . . . to keep them in local prisons.” To whom was that clause referring? To all who were arrested in connection with the case of the Anarchists? Or were there any exceptions made in the case of those Anarchists who only a few days before were sentenced to exile, concentration camps or other places?

Lukin and Vinogradova who were sentenced to the Archangel concentration camp for two years requested to be sent to any other concentration camp, rather than that one. It was known that the administration of the Archangel concentration camp forced the women to cohabit with them. The prisoners were kept in conditions

of filth, starvation and overwork and most of them were not able to survive this brutal regime.

The authorities promised to "investigate" this declaration.

(*"Sotzialisticheski Vestnik,"* No. 5, March 5, 1922. Berlin).

HUNGER STRIKES OF THE ANARCHIST UNIVERSALISTS*)

On January 28, 1922, a group of Anarchists in the Kessel'naya prison, in Moscow, declared a hunger strike. They demanded either to be given an open trial or to be permitted to leave the country. On the third day of the strike, January 30, those Anarchists were transferred to another prison, on which occasion they were subjected to physical violence. Three of their number (G. K. Askaroff, the Secretary of the Russian Section of the Anarcho-Universalists and editor of their journal, the "Universal"; S. A. Stitzenko and M. V. Simchin) sentenced to two years concentration camp in Severo-Dvinsk, were taken to Archangelsk, together with 17 other Anarchists who did not participate in the hunger strike and who had been sentenced to the concentration camp and exile in Archangelsk. Askaroff, Stitzenko and Simchin declared that they would continue their hunger strike, which they did. The guards accompanying them telegraphed several times en route to the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission (the *Cheka*), informing the latter of the situation. Arriving in Archangelsk the prisoners were sent to the headquarters of the local *Cheka* where examination of the accompanying official papers disclosed the fact that there had been filed two sentences against each of the three hunger strikers (Askaroff, Stitzenko and Simchin). The All-Russian *Cheka* had sentenced them to the concentration camp in Severo-Dvinsk, while the Moscow had at the same time ordered them to be sent to the Archangelsk camp. It was already the ninth day of the hunger strike and the men could hardly stand on their feet. They were thrown into a sleigh, with the thermometer showing 25° below zero, and sent to the "distribution point" (which is also the concentration camp) and there left for hours in the cold. For some reason the Distribution Point refused to receive them, and they were ordered back to the *Cheka*, where they were again left out in the cold (no less than half an hour). Then they were sent to the hospital. Within a few hours, upon the refusal of the men to accept medical aid, they were again put in the sleigh and returned to the *Cheka*. The

*) This letter was published in the book "Letters from Russian Prisons." See pp. 171-177.

next day they were taken in the same sleigh to the concentration camp and there placed in the general barracks. Within two days they were again transferred to the concentration camp hospital.

On the sixteenth day of the hunger strike Simchin was attacked by convulsions. The Commandant came then and stated that he had received a telegram from the Superintendent of the Cheka concentration camps, a certain Katznelson, of Moscow. In his telegram Katznelson asked the men to terminate their hunger strike till his arrival, in view of the fact he had been given authority to settle the whole matter to everybody's satisfaction. The men consented conditionally, but demanded that the Camp Administration put Katznelson's offer in writing. It took from the evening till 1 P. M. of the next day before the paper was prepared; on February 13, on the seventeenth day of the hunger strike, the latter was terminated. The medical staff of the hospital exerted themselves in a touching manner in behalf of the men, giving them the best of care, and soon they began to improve.

When Superintendent Katznelson arrived he did not show himself to the prisoners, and when called upon by them he pretended to know nothing of the matter. Upon being faced with the official "paper" he declared that he would make telegraphic inquiry of the Cheka. Convinced of the uselessness of all these excuses, Askaroff and the others began their second hunger strike on March 3, which proved of terrible effect upon their constitutions not yet recovered from the first hunger strike. Already on the first day all of them had a high temperature. On the third day Stitzenko showed a temperature of 40°, and he became deaf. On the fourth day Askaroff also had a temperature of 40°; he suffered convulsions, turned blue and cold, and for a time seemed almost dead. The prison administration, becoming alarmed, ordered the medical staff to list Askaroff among the contagious cases, so that in case of his death it could be officially reported that he died not from hunger but from some contagious disease, in all probability typhus.

About this time there was received a telegram from the All-Russian Cheka to the effect that the sentences of Askaroff and the others had been set aside, that they were to be put on trial and should therefore be sent to Moscow. The hunger strike was then of course terminated. After having somewhat recuperated in the hospital, the prisoners were transferred to Moscow, where they were placed in the "inner prison" (of the Cheka). Upon their threat to begin a new

hunger strike they were transferred on April 1 to the Kisselnaya Prison, from which they had been removed two months previously.

The story of the other 17 transferred Anarchists is as follows: In Archangel they were sent at night from the railroad station to the Cheka, arriving there tired, half frozen and hungry. The Commandant of the Cheka wanted to send seven of their number away immediately, to some unknown place. The prisoners declared that they would refuse to be moved till morning. The Commandant drew his revolver and threatened their lives, but that proved of no avail. The prisoners refused to give their names, and the Commandant could therefore not select the seven men he needed. In the morning all the seventeen were taken to the concentration camp, where they were divided into three groups and placed in separate barracks.

The Archangel Camp

The Archangel concentration camp consists of 20 barracks, six of which are occupied by prisoners. The barracks are long buildings, each about 140 feet long, containing two rows of double benches placed one above of the other. In these barracks there are crowded up to 500 persons, but just now the barracks contain (owing to reduced "loading") 100 to 150 men each. They all lie on the bare boards; there are no mattresses, pillows, or blankets. The place is alive with vermin. The first thing that struck the new arrivals was the sight of scores of naked prisoners carefully picking lice off their underwear. Dirt, cockroaches and lice constantly fall from the upper benches on the lower right on the sleepers below. On the whole, the upper places are to be preferred, also because it is warmer there, although the barracks are generally tolerably well heated and the inmates do not complain of cold.

Every new arrival is subjected to a thorough search, being completely undressed, examined all over, and so on. All the belongings of the prisoners, such as underwear, clothing, money, little mirrors, etc., are taken from them, to be turned over to the stock room. They are permitted to keep only one change of underwear. Those who have, for instance, both shoes and felt boots, or an overcoat and a fur half-coat, may retain only one of the things. Even the apparel with which the All-Russian Cheka had supplied the Anarchists were here taken away from them in spite of all their protests. The things are supposed to go to the stock room. But between 2 and 3 o'clock on the same night the Anarchists heard a group of overseers go to the

stock room and there begin to sort the things. The Anarchists raised a cry, and the keepers retreated in confusion, explaining that they intended only to examine the things again.

The population of the camp is made up of Kronstadt and Tambov prisoners, of Wrangel and Savinkov men, and a considerable number of Chekists, come to grief. The remarkable peculiarity of the camp consists in the fact that the prisoners serve as their own guards, manage all the affairs of the institution and keep up a most cruel regime. There is no paid staff in the camp. All the positions, comprising those of keepers, overseers, clerks, employees of the general administration, of the hospital, the educational department, and including even the "Acting Commandant," are filled by prisoners, mostly from the number of the Chekists. The members of the administration have feathered their bed so well there that some of them prefer to retain their positions after completing their sentences or receiving a pardon. That was the case with Oyia (educated as a jurist, formerly Chief of the Tambov Cheka, sentenced to be shot for colossal thefts of diamonds and other robberies, his sentence later changed to 25 years' service in the camp), the Acting Commandant, the engineer Nosatchenko, and others.

That this regime can be maintained is due to the presence of the many Cheka men and to the moral degradation and corruption which the great majority of the prisoners have fallen into—more correctly, have been forced into. Comparatively most decent have remained the Kronstadt men, but of their original number of 5,000 sent to the Archangelsk camp, there have remained, it is said, after one year, only 1,500 persons. And yet they were a young and exceptionally strong and healthy race. The inmates of the camp have lost almost all semblance of humanity. They are absorbed by the one thought of self-preservation by means of gaining the good will of the authorities and thus securing the position of an overseer or some good work. The surest and quickest way of "standing in" with the administration is to turn spy. As a result, all of them—prisoners, overseers and the higher officials—are busy spying on each other. On the average there are (the Bolsheviks keep statistics on every subject) twenty reports of spies every day. Nothing, not a single word spoken, is hidden from the authorities. There is no attempt in the camp at organization, mutual help, solidarity or united struggle. The female prisoners—formerly of the aristocracy and the *intelligentsia*—give themselves to any overseer at his first demand, without protest or resistance.

According to the inmates, the regime of the camp has become comparatively more tolerable, the punishments fewer and the treatment more decent after the prison had been investigated by a Commission appointed at the instigation of the "Red Cross".*) Yet the following fact throws light on the character of the existing discipline. When the Anarchists arrived, the peasant Glebov, of Vologda, who knew them and who had been imprisoned together with them before, tried to attract their attention by knocking on his window and shouting. For this he was put into the punishment cell for two weeks and afterward sent to Kholmogory to hard labor.

In the morning all the prisoners must line up for the count and at the given signal sing the "International." Before the investigation the singing of the "International" was obligatory, but now the prisoners are not forced to sing. Yet failure to sing is considered evidence of unrepentance and counter-revolutionary obstinacy. After the song the prisoners are formed into groups of ten for work within the camp. These are selected from the healthy and clad inmates. Many go about in such rags that even the authorities do not consider it possible to send them out into the cold. Refusal to work is punished with the dark cell.

The prisoners receive tea three times a day, with three ounces of sugar. Dinner consists of soup made of some fish, while for supper is given kasha (gruel) of wheat or rice, prepared with fat (imported). The products are of good quality; the food is not only eatable but palatable, but there is not enough of it. Previous to the investigation, the daily bread ration consisted of one pound per person; now it has been increased to a pound and a half.

Anarchist Hunger Strike

Soon after their arrival the Anarchists declared a hunger strike, putting forth the following demands: to be placed together in a separate wing, to have their elected *starosta* (official spokesman of the group) recognized by the authorities (in the camp the *starosta* is appointed by the administration), to receive books, papers and personal apparel; permission to associate with the women Anarchists, and some other lesser demands. The hunger strike lasted eight days. The authorities did nothing except to place armed guards beside the

*) Political Red Cross conducted by Madame Peshkova, former wife of Gorky. Functions for political prisoners. This Red Cross was closed by Soviet authorities in 1938.

hunger strikers. After a while word came from the All-Russian Cheka that the demands of the strikers concerned the internal management and therefore the matter was to be taken up by the local administration. Assistant Superintendent Lebedinsky agreed to satisfy almost all the demands of the strikers excepting their right of association with the women. That question Lebedinsky left to the decision of Katznelson, who was soon to arrive, and who was expected to legalize the newly gained rights. When Katznelson arrived he refused to enlarge the privileges of the Anarchists and declared that he would not issue the legalizing order, on the ground that the Anarchists were to be sent to Kholmogory, their presence in the Archangelsk camp being only temporary. Similarly Katznelson refused to release from the camp the Anarchists (Afanassiev, Kisselev, Altshuler and others), who had been sentenced not to the camp but to exile. (Incidentally, there are generally cases where those sent to Archangelsk for exile, with definitive instructions to that effect, are imprisoned in the camp).

Thus the eight-day hunger strike proved of no avail, and the Anarchists faced the question what to do under the circumstances. Then the women Anarchists forced their way into the main cell of their male comrades in order to consider joint action in the matter. The authorities sent for the guards, who used violence to pull the women out of the cell. Spontaneously there began a new hunger strike, the men immediately throwing their bread and other food out of the cell as a protest against the brutality toward the women. Within a few days the women were at night transferred to another prison—the House of Correction. The circumstances of the transfer were such that the women felt convinced they were being taken to execution. They threw off their upper clothing in order that the executioners might not possess themselves of it. Five of the hunger striking men were taken from their cell at night, subjected to violence and sent on a cart to Kholmogory. These five were: Karasik, Lukin, Tarasiuk, Silayev, and Mokhov. They continued their hunger strike during the transfer and upon their arrival at the new place. The women grew so weak from the second hunger strike that on the fifth day they were transferred to the camp. Soon Katznelson appeared there and declared that all the Anarchists, both the men and the women, would be sent to Kholmogory and that there they would be placed in a separate wing with full autonomy and all their demands satisfied. The women consented. Then Katznelson suggested that

they send one of their number as delegate to terminate the hunger strike at Kholmogory, because—as he correctly assumed—the prisoners there would give no credence to the communication of the authorities. The hunger strike was stopped on the sixth or seventh day, but the woman delegate was not called for and the administration acted very ambiguously. Then the women began the third hunger strike. They were transferred (with the exception of L. Altshuler, who fell sick as a result of long hunger), together with the remaining men to Kholmogory. No news has since been received from there.

1923

PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES TAKE NOTE!

In the "Izvestia of the Vtzik" (official organ of the All-Russian Executive Committee of the Soviets), issue of February 23, 1923, there appeared under the subtitle "In Moscow" the following note:

"The Anarchist Pochin." "The first issue of the Anarchist fortnightly "Pochin" just came out".

The first issue brought about a misunderstanding. The city police (militiamen) deeming the paper an underground publication, confiscated it. But the paper is in fact a legal publication, having been authorized by the respective Soviet bodies.

("POCHIN," a short-lived Anarchist newspaper, published in Moscow in 1923).

RECENT ARRESTS OF ANARCHISTS IN PETROGRAD

On July 9, 1923, forty-one Anarchists were arrested in Petrograd, and sixteen in "zassadas" took place in the city. (A "zassada" is a procedure whereby the police hide themselves in a searched house, permit no one to leave it, for hours or for days, and arrest everyone who visits the place).

Fifteen of the arrested Anarchists were charged with propaganda of Anarchist ideas, on the basis of Art. 60-63 of the Criminal Code. Two of them: Maria Veger and Mollie Steimer, were isolated and subjected to the regime of common criminals. In protest they declared a hunger strike, demanding to be transferred to the political "corridor" of the prison, to receive better treatment and the right of visits. Lida Surkova, member of the Left Social-Revolutionists; Zea Bendina, a non-partisan, and the Anarchist, S. Fleshin, moved by the spirit of solidarity, joined the hunger strikers. On the seventh day of the strike the Political Department met the demands of the strikers.

Fifteen Anarchists, who had participated in several hunger strikes during that time, received the following sentences:

1. Yegorov-Zenzinov—a workingman in the factory "Skorokhod"; an old Anarchist; persecuted under the Tzar; consumptive; very active in the revolution; exiled from Petrograd Province and forbidden to live in Moscow, Kharkov, Odessa and all ports for a period of two years.

2. Shilow—a factory worker, with the same sentence.
3. Sokolov—workingman, painter; an Anarchist since 1918; recently served two years for distributing Anarchist literature in the Red Army; the same sentence.
4. Gorbitch—a metal worker; an Anarchist since 1916; deported from the United States in 1920 for pro-Soviet propaganda; former member of the Union of Russian Workers in U. S. A.; exiled from Petrograd Province and forbidden to live in Moscow, Kharkov, Kiev, Odessa, in ports and border cities; sentenced to two years exile.
5. Savitzki—blacksmith; old Anarchist; deported from the United States in 1920 for pro-Soviet agitation; former member of the Union of Russian Workers in the U.S. A.; sentenced to two years exile.
6. Rusyankin—student, Petrograd Polytechnical Institute; sentenced to two years exile.
7. Sapelov—student, Pedagogical Institute; sentenced to two years exile.
8. Petrov—Red Army man; sentenced to two years exile.
9. Likhachev—factory worker; old Anarchist; persecuted under the Tzar; exiled to place of birth for one year.
10. Maria Veger—teacher; Anarchist since 1914; active in the revolution; arrested in 1921 and sent to Archangel for two years; escaped in 1922; very ill with malaria and scurvy; sentenced to three years in the Concentration Camp, Solovetzki Monastery.
11. Molly Steimer—arrested in 1918 in New York for protesting against American intervention in Russian affairs, and sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment but after serving two years of her term deported to Russia in 1921; arrested by the Bolsheviki twice, for aiding imprisoned Anarchists and corresponding with her comrades abroad, and again for Anarchist propaganda. Exiled from Russia forever.
12. S. Fleshin—active as an Anarchist in the United States, and since 1917 in Russia with “Golos Trouda” and the “Nabat” in the Ukraine; repeatedly arrested by the Whites for underground work; since 1920 employed by the Petrograd Museum of the Revolution; repeatedly arrested by the Bolsheviki as an Anarchist; exiled from Russia forever.
13. Pryanishnikov—metal worker; old Anarchist; very active under the Tzar and in the Revolution; awaiting sentence in the House of Preliminary Detention in Petrograd. Pryanishnikow and Ponomarev declared a hunger strike on August 18, 1923, demanding liberation, were forcibly fed.

14. Yefim—a workingman in the factory of the Petrograd Consumers' League; had been repeatedly arrested under the Tzar; active Anarchist all through the Revolution; awaiting sentence in the House of Preliminary Detention in Petrograd.

15. Ponomarev—student of the Petrograd Pedagogical Institute; awaiting sentence in the House of Preliminary Detention in Petrograd.

(Bulletin of the Joint Committee for the Defense of Revolutionists Imprisoned in Russia, October 1923, Berlin).

ARREST OF T. POLOSOVA

Tatayana Polosova, an active worker of the Anarcho-Syndicalist organization "Golos Trouda," was delegated by the Moscow Society to Aid Imprisoned Anarchists to bring from the Pertominsk Concentration Camp (in the Province of Archangel) the child of Tamara Veger, an Anarchist imprisoned in Pertominsk. A day before her planned departure with the child for Petrograd, Polosova was arrested and has since remained in the hands of the Archangel G. P. U. (Che-Ka) without any charges being preferred against her.

(Ibid)

TRANSFER OF ALL POLITICALS TO SOLOVIETZKI ISLANDS

All the politicals of the Pertominsk Camp, numbering about one hundred and seventy five, were transferred in July (1923) to the dreaded Solovietzki Monastery. The latter is an island in the White Sea, entirely cut off from the rest of the world during 9 months in the year. Malaria, scurvy and simialr diseases are the scourge of the place. The prison administration, with the exception of the Chief Warden and his assistant, consists entirely of criminals serving time or on probation, of Communists convicted of crime, and of Chekists in disgrace. These vie with each other to curry favor with the higher administration. There is a hospital attached to the prison, but visitors to sick prisoners are permitted only when according to the physician's opinion, the patient is about to die. There is no post office at Solovietzki. Mail goes only as far as Archangel, and no letters are delivered to the prisoners. Politicals who had served in Schluesselburg and Petropavlovka (Tzars worst prisons) insist that Solovietzki is the most terrible experience they have suffered.

All the prison and concentration camps in the North are so overfilled that new arrivals are refused admission .

All the old places of exile have been "resurrected," and politicals are sent to the most isolated and uninhabitable parts, such as the Turukhansky and Narimsky Kray, to distant villages on the border of Thibet, etc., where they are deprived of virtually every means of existence. All exiles are now sent by etape, often passing days and weeks at the various "distributing" prisons. Living conditions are filthy and unhygienic. Disease is rampant, and medical attention most primitive.

(Ibid)

THE ARREST OF LEA GUTMAN AND OTHERS

Lea Gutman and Helena Ganshina were delegated by the Moscow Aid Society to travel North and distribute food, clothing and other necessaries among the politicals in the prisons and camps of Archangel Province. They went with the permission of the all-Russian G. P. U. During their presence in the North, the Anarchists imprisoned in the Pertominsky Camp declared a hunger strike, demanding better living conditions and transfer to Archangel. Because Gutman, Ganshina and Peter Skurikhin (an exile in Archangel for 2 years) informed the comrades in Petrograd and Moscow about the Pertominsky hunger strike, they were arrested and sent to Moscow. There the G. P. U. sentenced Gutman and Skurikhin to two years exile in Beresov, in the Tobolsk Province. It required a hunger strike of seven days to change the sentence to exile to Narimsky Kray, which is considered a more preferable place of exile.

(Ibid)

TWO COMRADES DISAPPEAR

On November 15 the United Committee for Defense, sent the following appeal to the Bureau of the International Workingmen's Association:

Dear Comrades:

As you know, the persecutions of Russian revolutionists by the Bolshevik government still continue. We know that the comrades of the International Workingmen's Association have always been active on behalf of the Russian revolutionists. You always responded when the Defense Committee appealed to you to help save a few out of the thousands of victims of Bolshevik terror. And now we ask your help again, in this case, which is unusual even under the extraordinary conditions of present life in Russia.

Comrade David Kogan (Lev Rubin), an attractive personality, a man of high integrity and renown as a revolutionary Anarchist, (he spent many months in Denikin's prisons), was arrested, together with another Anarchist Ivan Akhtirsky, by the G. P. U. in Moscow. Since then both of these comrades vanished. All the attempts of our comrades to find them have been in vain. Very significant in this connection is the fact that Kogan's sister, the wife of one of the big-wigs in the Communist party and the Soviet Government, Khybishev—People's Commissar and member of the Politbureau), also tried unsuccessfully to discover his whereabouts.

Comrade Kogan is afflicted with heart neurosis; both, he and Akhtirsky, lived of late under very distressing conditions. Our comrades in Russia are greatly alarmed over the fate of those two revolutionists, who vanished without leaving any trace behind them. We are convinced that the International Workingmen's Association will use its influence, as it did in the case of comrade A. M. Shapiro, in order to enable us at least to locate these two comrades. The complete disappearance of both, is an outrage of the kind which does not even happen under Mussolini's regime.

We are led to believe that the worst has happened, and that the Russian government does not have the courage to state so openly. In that case we ask the Bureau of the International Workingmen's Association to bring into full light this unparalleled crime and the conditions under which it was perpetrated.

With revolutionary greetings.

Secretary

(*Ibid*, No. 2, December, 1923).

ARRESTS IN MOSCOW

Yefrem Rubinchik, active worker of the sole Anarcho-Syndicalist publishing house "Golos Trouda," (long since closed up), was arrested in the month of September and is still in prison. He is stricken with scurvy. It is clear that this arrest has for its aim the liquidation of this publishing work.

Mary Vegler, was brought from Vologda to the Petrograd prison and was taken away from there. Her whereabouts remain unknown.

(*Ibid*)

THE LETTERS FROM PRISONS AND EXILES

September 13, 1923.

Dear Comrades:

I am sure that my first letter has already been received, and therefore you know that the money received previously reached its destination. At present I am in receipt of the \$50 which were sent by telegraph.

Five thousand roubles were given to Mollie, and the rest, 20,000, were sent to the comrades in the North. To be more explicit, we bought the most necessary provisions, such as butter, sugar and other things and sent them to the comrades.

You can hardly imagine what joy and pleasure that brought them. They are a group of 30 comrades concentrated, in spite of hardships, in one place and together they try to make their life bearable.

Our comrade M. S. is also with them. Their needs are great, comrades, and we must help them at least every month with the same amounts as we used to.

We thank you heartily for the contributions which are surely used for the best and most necessary purpose.

With comradely greetings,

P. S.

(*"Behind the Bars," The Voice of the Imprisoned. No.1, January 1924, New York*).

August 22, 1923.

Dear Comrades:

Because of my absence from K. I was unable to answer your letter sooner. The money was received and distributed among the comrades who are in such great need. Until now the money was received very regularly, but for the last few months nothing has come and the need is very great indeed. The amount you send is small compared with the great demands.

Life is terrible here, especially for those who are in the distant prisons. Most of our comrades are concentrated in the Northern provinces, where communication of any kind is impossible. Yes, our poor comrades! It is very painful! They have no one. You are the only ones who can help them.

Do not forget our comrades during the winter; remember their hardships.

With comradely greetings,

P. D.

(*Ibid*)

April 9, 1923.

Dear Comrades:

Your two letters and parcel received. We thank you heartily and be assured that the things sent will be used only for prisoners or for those who are being released conditionally. They can be arrested and imprisoned at any time.

In general, the imprisonment, arrests and persecution have been stopped a little, although not everywhere. This is due mostly to the protests raised by our comrades abroad; also because our activities were stopped.

We have not heard from our comrades in O. for a long time. Some of them are under arrest. Censorship, as you know, is very strict; therefore we cannot communicate. I am sending you an address through which you can communicate with them and help them directly. We are also sending money to all those parts of Russia that we can reach.

S. (Ibid)

Dear Comrades:

Don't be surprised if suddenly you get a letter from me. Many times I thought of writing to you, to tell how we are getting along and what we are doing in Russia. I didn't write because while I was free there was no way of communicating, and when there was a way, I was in jail.

Especially did I long to write to you because I still remember your last letter to me in Chicago, the time you sent me the credentials from the M. E. It was just before I left for Russia, which was in May, 1917. You envied us because we were Russian born and able to go to a country where, we all thought, there would be freedom for the working class. Yes, in the time of enthusiasm we were to be envied, because we bravely fought the battles for freedom on the Russian fields; but my dear friend, the lucky ones are not those who come to Russia—o, no!

I went through a lot of fighting, was wounded many times, and now I am being rewarded for all I went through:—jail, jail and jail again! . . .

Since 1919 I have been hunted like a beast, spied after and framed. The last arrest was the most cruel, though the most foolishly fabricated one, and when I proved it to them, I was plainly told that I was arrested because I might be active in the future.

A verdict was brought against me. I was exiled to one of the

worst places in the world called "Narimsky Kray," In protest against this sentence, I hungered twenty eight days, and then at the end of the twenty-eighth day they started to feed me by force artificially. I preferred to die in a Moscow jail than to die on the way to the wilderness.

After five days of artificial and forcible feeding, I was finally, in a dying condition, brought home on the guarantee of a high government official. He took the responsibility to get me back after three months to the authorities to be sent to the "Narimsky Kray."

My left side from the toes up to the arm is paralyzed, but this will not stop their sending me away as soon as the three months will expire.

I am home, but materially very badly off. I am short of food, necessary medicines, and care of doctors. Rose and Esther are also invalids of the struggle for freedom. Rose is left with a stiff leg and swollen arteries on both legs, she must undergo an operation. Esther can't obtain work because she doesn't know Russian well enough. The boy is only 11 years old, they only depend on my earnings, but my present condition is terrible, as jails and only jails took my health away, and as that is not enough, I am to be sent away, never to see the bright world again.

Immediate help is needed. Do for me what we used to do for others.

I remain fraternally yours,

M. C.

(*Ibid*)

April 3, 1923.

Dear Comrades:

I must tell you, dear comrades, that our needs are great, greater than ever before. Our comrades are in need of money, clothes and provisions especially. You are aware of the fact that our comrades are dispersed all over Russia, in the most awful places, and in incredible conditinos. Most of them are in the distant, desolate provinces, where it is almost impossible to reach them with help.

No matter how far and poor we are, comrades, we must help with all our might, at least enough to enable them to live. We used to receive help from Berlin comrades, but we have not had anything from them for quite a while. The last few dollars have been spent on things for our comrades in the distant provinces.

We ask you again and again not to forget our comrades.

With comradely greetings,

P. P.

(*Ibid*)

1924

ARRESTS IN MOSCOW

Numerous arrests took place in Moscow on October 23. Most of the victims are left Social-Revolutionists and Maximalists.

The well known Anarcho-Syndicalist, and manager of "Golos Trouda" the only Anarchist publishing house in Russia, comrade Rubinchik, was arrested in September and still remains in prison, very ill with scurvy. The Moscow comrades conclude that the Government simply wants to destroy the publishing house. Maria Veger, who was returned from Vologda to the Petrograd Prison, was exiled to an unknown locality in the early part of October.

(*"Bulletin of the Anarchist Red Cross," No. 1, April 1924, New York*).

SOLOVIETZKI MONASTERY

The brutalities perpetrated against the prisoners in the Solovietzki Monastery are beyond description. This monastery is situated on an island in the White Sea to which boats go twice a year. It was originally used as a place of exile for dissenters against the Russian Church, and now the Russian Soviet Government has found it compatible with its conscience to send men and women there who do not agree with its form of government. Prisoners in this inhuman place are mercilessly beaten for the slightest infraction of the rules, undressed and forced to stand naked in a dark cell, with a temperature below zero. At the present time two prisoners, Klysiev and Zapechin are lying there crippled with hands and feet frozen off, spitting blood and awaiting death as the only release from their sufferings.

On December 19 of last year, the prisoners revolted against the unbearable conditions. It took two months for any information about their revolt to reach the outside world. According to an official statement in the Moscow "Izvestia," it was admitted that a terrible riot occurred between officials and political prisoners in Solovietzki, that during this riot four persons were killed and two wounded.

Unofficial statements made in the American press gave the figures as seven killed and nineteen wounded. The fact that the government has officially admitted that occurrence and admitted that four were killed and two wounded shows what a terrible affair it must have been.

All the the government did was to appoint an investigating committee at the head of which was placed Smirnov, himself a member of the Department of Justice.*)

(Ibid)

THE MURDER OF KOGAN AND AKHTIRSKY

Already in November 1923, we began making efforts to elicit information from the Russian Government as to the whereabouts of the two Anarchists: David Kogan and Ivan Akhtirsky, both of whom vanished from the chambers of the Che-Ka without leaving any traces behind.

Despite the assistance of the International Workingmen's Association and the French Aid Committee, we have not received a single reply to our inquiries. The comrades from Russia report that all their efforts to get information about these comrades have been of no avail.

All of which confirms our grimmest conjectures: Two honest and self-denying revolutionary workers: *David Kogan and Ivan Akhtirsky were secretly shot by the Bolshevik Government.*

(The Bulletin of the Joint Committee for the Defense of the Revolutionists Imprisoned in Russia." Appeared in "Volna" No. 51, July 1924, U. S. A.).

THE LETTERS FROM PRISONS AND EXILES

After long and distressing experiences with the now socialist prisons and camps, I again obtained freedom. Although in the real sense it is not freedom at all, but the same prison expanded to the confines of an entire city. One is always under strict surveillance, and we ceaselessly feel the hideous tentacles of the socialist G. P. U.

You can see from this that any activity of a social and political nature is utterly impossible. I and my comrades are forced to be the silent onlookers of a life of violence and arbitrary rule exercised over the people who are violently struggling for their existence.

*) The full stories of the massacre of the political prisoners of the Solovietzki Islands can be found in the book "Letters from Russian Prisoners."

Workers are placed in the position of Egyptian slaves. Peasants are despoiled by taxes and by prices lowered to the very minimum on agricultural products, and raised to the utmost on products of the manufacturing industries owned as a monopoly by the central power of the ruling Communist Party.

Workers are exploited in the most predatory and shameless manner; they are despoiled of their pitiful wage by all sorts of levies for the benefit of the state power whose adventures are always covered up with alleged high sounding purposes, such as extending aid to various nations, loans of various kinds etc; along with this predatory evil there is also the existence of a huge army of unemployed which comes as a result of the inability or unwillingness to raise industries to a higher level.

Poverty, hunger, destitution are rampant, and all this is set off by the unbridled luxury indulged in by the ruling caste and the "bigshots" of the speculative and commercial world. The air is permeated with the stifling after-effects of a six-year-long reaction and terror. Fearing the Che-Ka and executions, men are ready to carry out every mad and senseless whim of the power-drunk Kremlin tyrants. Moral disintegration and corruption have permeated layers of the population. Professors, doctors, priests, middle class men, workers and peasants yield to the self-seeking interests in whose name they are ready to sacrifice all self-respect, beginning with betrayals of their personal convictions and ending with espionage, provocations and betrayal. This demoralization is becoming more and more marked from day to day and the state power pushes the nation further and further along the road of ignorance and inhumanity.

The cultural level does not rise, but keeps on falling. The growing generation is corrupted by the Komsomol where personality and individuality are eroded by a distorted Marxism. Crude materialism and the lack of ethical notions displace the honest, noble impulses of the growing generation. The new state leavened with the old spirit of the Russian absolutist state, builds a "new" man, the new young Communist or what is even worse, a hooligan. Such is our folk life in actuality.

Every manifestation of social life is ruthlessly suppressed. Prisons and other places of confinement are overcrowded; executions and tortures have already become a part and parcel of the Socialist government even to a greater extent than during the rule of the most ferocious Tzars. The ranks of revolutionaries are broken up

morally and ideologically. The old revolutionaries have become invalids in the realm of creative thought. The strongest among them have perished and those isolated individuals, who have survived, have secluded themselves, becoming inactive and waiting for a change of weather. Youngsters have not grown up yet. The old swords have been dulled in the battles, and new ones have not yet been forged. The search for new truths in academic fields is nothing but a psychological reaction, losing oneself and wandering in the darkness.

Life is clear, only one has to approach it in a simple manner, without piling up of superstructures and systems. . . .

(*"Bulletin of Russian Anarchists,"* No. 2, June, 1924, Berlin).

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During the last period there has been a noticeable revival of work, but unremitting arrests hindered this work greatly. We succeeded in organizing a group of comrades, but the arrests on the First of May destroyed our efforts.

Perhaps, you know already that we have a stable currency; that prices of industrial products are very high, due to the inability of the State to organize industries properly and also to the wide-spread speculations in the administrative spheres. And you may also know that prices of agricultural products are kept at an artificially low level so that the peasants are worn out by the heavy taxes and unable to buy the manufactured products.

But you do not know, perhaps, that the workers and peasants who are disillusioned with the Russian revolution, are still looking forward, although they do not see any way out. They wait for us, for our words. Everywhere there is a muffled protest against the existing order of things; at times this protest breaks forth in the form of partial strikes and emphatic demands, which are often met. But the Government has at its disposal a monstrously strong weapon — retrenchment. The army of unemployed is growing from day to day.

The stores are stocked with commodities; the bourgeoisie and responsible communists are having a good time, but workers and peasants are bending their backs ever lower.

You know already what happened to our comrades in the prisons, of the beatings administered to them. We were shipped out to the concentration camps of Pertominsk, Kholmogorsk and Archangelsk under the most unsanitary conditions. We were starved, beaten

up, administered artificial feeding during hunger strikes and brought to such a state that some comrades committed suicide by setting themselves on fire.

Then all the political prisoners were concentrated in Solovietzki, in the White Sea. The food there is not so bad, but it is never varied and conducive to the development of scurvy. In the winter (from October to May) no mail is received, navigation being closed for all that period. Letters get through very seldom. Our comrades, the Anarchists (there are more than thirty of them) occupy a separate cottage; half of the lake and a plot of land for gardening is fenced off for their use. There is no surveillance within the confines of this little colony. No visitors are allowed during the winter.

There is also a prison for political prisoners in Yaroslavl. The concentration camp is Suzdal was broken up and the inmates were transferred to other prisons.

Exiled prisoners do not get any subsidies from the State, and at the same time they are blacklisted from work. The situation is so bad in this respect that comrades very often demand to be sent to prison. In addition to the difficulty of obtaining work there is the most brazen sort of police surveillance under which the slightest movements of every exile are subject to control.

Arrests still continue. Three weeks before the first of May, more than 1,500 people were arrested, most of them university students. Prisons are overcrowded.

The situation of the workers is also terrible. They are forced to work overtime and to overstrain themselves at work.

There is a great deal of unrest among workers.

There was a strike at a clothing factory in Peter (Leningrad). It was neither big nor a long strike, but it was a good one: unanimous and well-sustained; no one refused to take part in it, not even Communists.

We have now very few active workers in our movement. Many of our people have been exiled while others live in constant fear of arrests. But we are not dispirited. The work goes on and little by little it is gaining strength. Individual fighters emerge spontaneously from the mass of people and build up their organizations all by themselves.

(Ibid).

1925

ON THE SOLOVIETZKI ISLANDS

. . . . The hunger strike involving over two hundred politicals began on October 3 and terminated the 17th. The Social-Revolutionists, both Right and Left, and the Anarchists participated in it. The strike was occasioned by the refusal of the administration to transfer three prisoners, (sent from Kuban and describing themselves as Left Social-Revolutionists), to the political regime.

At the end of the second week of the hunger strike the Elder (representative) of the Social-Democratic prisoners, succeeded in getting an interview with Eichmans, the acting chief of the camp. As a result, the hunger strikers were temporarily put into the political category, awaiting instructions in the matter from Moscow.

Reports from Moscow already indicate that the Bolshevik authorities would refuse to grant the prisoners' demands. Such action will most likely result in further conflicts.

(The same "Bulletin", January-February, 1925, Berlin).

OTHER REPRISALS

A number of Anarchists, of the so-called Karelin group (formerly on friendly terms with the Bolsheviks), were arrested in Moscow and the provinces.

In the middle of October, 1924, a number of Anarchists were arrested by order of the G. P. U. throughout the western part of the country. Among them are: K. Govar, I. Bobr (peasant), M. Sednev (worker), N. Cherepok (clerk), A. Litzkevich (peasant), P. Yurchenko (worker), Balunkevich (worker), Rodkevich (student), Likhtenko, Gourov, and others.

It is interesting to note that during the house searches of the above prisoners, not only the private correspondence was confiscated, but even Anarchist works of Kropotkin, Tolstoy, etc.

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On January 5, 1925, Aaron Baron, who finished his term in Solovky, was brought to Moscow and placed at the disposal of the G. P. U.

*(The United Committee for the Defense of
Imprisoned Revolutionists in Russia.)*

COMRADE LAZAREVICH ARRESTED

It is already four months since comrade Lazarevich was arrested. He is one of the translators of the Comintern and is known in the Syndicalist circles abroad. The "sins" of Lazarevich consisted in voicing openly his sympathies to Syndicalism and also in receiving Syndicalist literature from abroad and reading it among friends. He was arrested upon the denunciation of one who had been present at one of those readings. The police hunt for comrade Lazarevich lasted three days and was organized by ambushing the places visited by him.

Lazarevich was one of the few sincere comrades who entertained illusions about the possibility of a united front with the Bolsheviks. He enjoys a high reputation among his Communist co-workers. And still, none of the Comintern people dared to intercede in his behalf. It seems that Lazarevich is now to be given a chance to make a thorough acquaintance with the G. P. U. prisons. (*Ibid*).

NEW BOLSHEVIK METHODS

The Communists have initiated a new policy toward the politicals whose prison sentences have expired. Instead of being released, the prisoner is administratively (that is, simply by order of the G. P. U.) condemned to another term of exile in a different part of the country. The most distant and forsaken points are selected for the purpose, places little populated and often several hundred miles distant from any railroad. Exile to such a place is equivalent to a sentence of absolute isolation and gradual death from starvation. For the exile receives from the Government the munificent sum of 6 roubles and 25 kopecks (about \$3.50) per month, which is barely sufficient for mere bread. The G. P. U. does not permit the exile to secure employment, for fear of his "contaminating" those with whom he might come in contact. Thus the political in exile is effectively deprived of means of existence.

From a large number of similar documents in our possession, we publish below the protest against this new policy sent to the G. P. U. by E. B. Rubinchik-Meyer, manager of the "Golos Trouda" publishing house of Moscow, which issued the works of Bakunin, Kropotkin, Jean Grave and other Anarchist thinkers.

To the General Political Administration (G. P. U.)

To the Chief of the Secret Department

Statement of the Administrative Exile, the Anarcho-Syndicalist

RUBINCHIK-MEYER, EFRED BORISOVICH.

At the end of June, 1924, the sentence of internment in the Suzdal concentration camp was, owing to illness, changed to banishment to Tomsk. Before my departure I was assured by the responsible agent of the G. P. U., citizen Kil, that the G. P. U. would put no obstacle in the way of my accepting employment.

In spite of this solemn promise, each time I was able to find a job, the local department of the G. P. U. forbade the heads of the institutions (bookstore of the Central Labor Cooperative; bookstore of the provincial department of National Education; bookstore of the Siberian Publishing Department, and others) to employ me.

The last prohibition—the fifth—was made in writing under the signature of the Assistant-Chief of the Tomsk Department of the G. P. U., Chuntanov.

After having thus had undeniable proof of the measures against me, I resolved to have a final explanation on the matter with citizen Chuntanov. I am now convinced myself that I will not be permitted to take up any employment.

Having no means of receiving medical treatment, I asked the local G. P. U. to allow me free treatment at one of the local hospitals. Up to the present I have received no reply.

In connection with the refusal to permit me to work, I sent a statement to the Assistant-Chief of the Secret Department of the G. P. U., Andreyeva, which I forwarded by registered post on September 13, 1924. I have received no reply, and the local G. P. U. has received no instructions.

This state of affairs not only prevents my curing my illness, which is getting worse all the time, but condemns me to starvation.

I protest emphatically against these tactics of the G. P. U. and insist that I should be allowed to go abroad for medical treatment.

Member of the Anarcho-Syndicalist Union "Golos Trouda"

EFREM BORISOVICH RUBINCHIK-MEYER.

Tomsk, Dec. 8, 1924.

(*Bulletin of the Joint Committee for the Defense of Revolutionists in Russia*, March-April, 1925).

THE CASE OF AARON BARON

Exiled to Siberia by the Tzar, Baron had escaped to America and was active there for several years in the labor and revolutionary movement. In 1917 he returned to Russia to help "build Socialism".

He became one of the most popular writers and lecturers in the Ukraine. In 1920 Baron was arrested by the Bolsheviks together with a large number of other delegates to the Kharkov Anarchist Congress which, by the way, was to be held with the knowledge of the authorities.

Since then Baron, like his comrades Ivan Charin, Leah Gottman, Michail Biriulin, L. Lebedov, etc., arrested on the same occasion, has been dragged about from prison to prison, without any definite charge ever having been made against him or the others. His imprisonment in Moscow, Orel, Kharkov and other places has involved for Baron hunger strikes totaling 50 days.

Now, his sentence of two years in the Solovietzki Islands having expired, Baron hoped to be at liberty at least long enough to recuperate his shattered health. But a recent letter informs us that the Government has now brought the charge against him of having "aroused public sentiment abroad against his imprisonment in the Solovietzki and having induced revolutionists visiting Russia to seek his release."

This charge is no doubt due to the friendly efforts of John Turner, member of the British Labor Delegation to Russia to intercede—at the request of the *Joint Committee*—in behalf of Aaron Baron. The latter has now been sent by etape (travel by slow stages, often on foot), to the distributing prison of Novo-Nikolaevsk and thence to Altai, Siberia.

A similar fate has been meted out to several other politicals whose terms in the Solovietzki have expired. This policy is now being applied throughout the country.

(*Ibid*).

DAVID KOGAN AND IVAN AKHTIRSKY

At last the fate of these two comrades has been ascertained. The official request made by the International Working Men's Association upon Moscow to disclose the whereabouts of the men remained unanswered.

Now we have learned from a reliable source that David Kogan and Ivan Akhtirsky have long since been executed by the Bolsheviks. Their execution is one of the most dastardly crimes committed by the Communists. Both men were idealists of noblest quality. Kogan, particularly, was an exceptionally fine personality, whose high ethical character and sympathetic nature had widely earned him the affectionate appellation of "Little Christ."

(*Ibid*).

1926

POLITICALS APPEAL FROM PRISON

(*Letter of the politicals of the Kharkov Prison No. 1, originally addressed to the Central Executive Committee of the All-Ukrainian Soviets.*)

On the occasion of the recent visits to Russia by various European labor delegations, the official Soviet press has repeatedly asserted that the Government "offers every possible opportunity to investigate, freely and unhindered, life and conditions in Russia." We emphatically protest against this lie and against the infamous misrepresentation and falsification of the prison situation by the organs of the Che-Ka. Are you aware that on the night of the 15th of August, on the eve of the visit of two German labor delegations to our prison (the Central Prison of Kharkov), the imprisoned Socialists and Anarchists were subjected to a terrible outrage? At 9 in the evening there appeared in our prison Krajniy, the General Public Prosecutor, who is the supreme authority of the entire Che-Ka (GPU) of the Ukraine. He was accompanied by the Chief of the G. P. U., the Governor of the prison, and a large body of the keepers. At the order of the Prosecutor the keepers attacked the political prisoners, because the latter refused to follow them to the G. P. U. They knew that it was intended to hide them in the G. P. U. dungeons, so that the expected delegations should not find them in the Kharkov prison. They protested against such a disgraceful and brutal procedure, as well as against the attempt to deceive the delegates. Are you aware that for this the prisoners were insulted, beaten, threatened with revolvers, and kicked into submission? The politicals, finally finding themselves in the G. P. U prison, declared a *Hunger Strike*, in protest against the official outrage. Following this, the Labor Youth Delegation of Holland visited the Kharkov prison, and when they inquired whether there were any politicals there, the Prison Governor replied emphatically: "There are no political prisoners here."

Similar "information" also was received by the American student delegation, when they visited the Kharkov prison, some time before the Holland delegates. Again, when the German working women delegation visited the prison, on September 14, the politicals were taken into the prison yard for a walk, so that the delegates could

not see them. When, however, the prisoners learned of the presence of the delegation, they demanded an interview with the latter. The prison authorities assured them that it was not a foreign delegation that was visiting the prison. "It is merely an excursion of Communist women from the German colonies of the USSR," the Governor asserted. He promised to bring the visitors to the political wing of the prison, but of course he did not keep his promise. As we later learned from the papers, the delegation was really that of the labor unions of Germany.

These are the means used by the authorities to "inform" visiting delegates about the conditions in Russia! And that in spite of the solemn promise given us by Chief Prosecutor Krajniy that he would permit visiting labor delegations to see the politicals, even in their cells. But of course Krajniy, as well as the prison authorities, know very well that if the delegates were permitted to see us they would easily convince themselves that revolutionary Socialists are kept in prison, that they are doomed by administrative process (without trial) to long years of imprisonment and exile in out-of-the-way places, that the Che-Ka tries to compel them to sign statements for the press announcing their resignation from the parties of opposition, and that the politicals are persecuted for refusing to comply with such demands.

We protest most emphatically against this vile deceit practiced upon the delegates from foreign countries! We denounce the arbitrary and brutal treatment of the political prisoners!

We consider in our social and political duty to call to this the attention of the Presidium of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive of the Soviets. In the hearing of the workers of the world we demand to know: do you approve of these barbaric methods to demonstrate to the labor delegations of Western Europe "the success of socialistic constructiveness?" Do you sanction these means, or will you admit that they are the methods of despicable climbers of the G. P. U. and of zealous prison keepers? Yes or No?

September 15, 1926

Signed by 17 politicals, among them 7 Anarchists, 1 Left Social-Revolutionist, 5 Zionist-Socialists and 4 members of the Socialist Youth.

("Bulletin of the Relief Fund of the International Workingmen's Association for Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists Imprisoned or Exiled in Russia," No. 1, December, 1926, Paris-Berlin; English).

IN PRISON AND EXILE

During the past summer the prison terms of a number of politicals were completed. Instead of being liberated, however, they were either sent into exile—generally for three years—or their original sentences were increased. This method is now practiced by the Bolsheviks systematically; a political prisoner virtually never regains liberty

MARIA VEGER, a well-known Anarchist, who since 1923 has been continuously in prison, including the Solovietzki and Upper Uralsk, where she contracted the fearful scurvy, has now, upon the completion of her original sentence, been sent into exile to Archangel, for three years. Similar is the fate of TATYANA POLOSOVA, formerly a worker in the Anarchist publishing house "Golos Trouda." Together with her little child she was exiled to Tver, also for three years. DORA STEPNEYA and child, for years an exile (**lately in Tula**) has been transferred to the cold region of Archangel. Very ill.

YAROSLAVL. (Polit-isolator). By the middle of April, 1926, 99 politicals were imprisoned in the "polit-isolator." Among them were: 24 Social-Democrats; 22 members of the Social-Revolutionist Party; 22 Left Social-Revolutionists; 15 Anarchists; 7 Socialists-Zionists; 5 Zionists of the Right, and 4 non-partisan workingmen. It is significant that the political Red Cross (Mme. Peshkova, Moscow) has information of only about 60 of that number.

On May 1, 1926, the politicals were compelled to resort to protests and tactics of obstruction, for reasons still unknown to us. Some of them were thereupon transferred to Tobolsk and Moscow.

(Ibid).

LIFE IN EXILE

Information from a reliable source has recently reached us concerning the visit of the notorious chekist Drozdov to the political exiles in Izhma, a small village in Eastern Siberia, almost one thousand miles distant from any railroad. Our correspondent writes: During his stay of two weeks Drozdov created no end of trouble, particularly because of his brutal and arbitrary demeanor. He distributed governmental aid in a most unjust manner: some received 10 rubles for the past month (about 5 dollars), while others were left without any support. The older revolutionists were allowed a very small share, while some of the younger element got very little, and in some cases, practically nothing. A protest signed by all the exiles was sent to Moscow. Drozdov was furious. In consequence,

the exiles were deprived of their work and means of support. Seven Zionists were ordered transferred to the most isolated and wretched places, such as Ukhta and Ussa, populated almost exclusively by non-Russian, nomadic tribes. Life there virtually means death. Naturally, the exiles refused to go, and the other politicals supported them. They all barricaded themselves in a house, almost 18 persons. Drozdov sent against them a detachment of unarmed soldiers, militia and peasants. No shots were fired, but extreme brutality was applied, and one by one the victims were dragged out, thrown into sleighs, bound and gagged. . . . It was a terrible sight: men laid flat in sleighs, most of them bleeding, and tied hand and foot. No hats, some with just their shirts on, and outside a frost of 40 degrees. Drozdov himself was the "hero" of the occasion, personally dragging the politicals out and pulling them down the stairs by the hair. "When you'll be in power," he kept shouting "you'll drag me by the hair!" . . . His purpose in issuing governmental aid to the Anarchists and other revolutionists, while refusing the same to the Zionists, was to create enmity in the exile colony and set it against itself. But he figured wrong, because the entire political population demonstrated its solidarity. Now the greater number are threatened with transfer to unknown places. It was the greatest outrage ever perpetrated in the region of Izhma. . . . It is feared that similar scenes may repeat themselves in the near future, because much bad feeling has been created. . . .

NIKOLAI BELAEV and VANYA KABAS-TARASIUK, Archangel exiles, were recently arrested with 9 other comrades for receiving financial aid from their friends abroad, and were transferred to various places in the furthest North of Russia. These arrests were accompanied with great violence on the part of the local authorities, who exploited the occasion to vent their spite against the Anarchist prisoners. Subsequently Belyaev and Tarasiuk were transferred to Moscow and thence sent to the extremely hot climate of Kasakhstan, somewhere in Turkestan.

VERA KEVRIK, splendid type of Russian revolutionist, for several years in prison and exile recently took very ill in Biysk, Siberia. Inquiries have brought to light that she was removed from Biysk, the financial aid sent her being returned by the forwarding bank on the ground of "unknown whereabouts." No trace of her has since been found, and there is reason to fear that the young Anarchist woman has since died.—RACHEL SHAPIRO, not long ago arrested

in Moscow, was temporarily released only because of the poor physical condition of her child, but on condition of weekly registration at the headquarters of the G. P. U. Yet the very first time she called to report, she was informed that she would not be permitted to remain in Moscow or vicinity. Her place of exile is now Kasakhstan, Turkestan. Another Anarchist woman, KASHENA, has at the same time been exiled to Cherdin.

VANYA CHARIN, an Anarchist held by the Bolsheviks in prison since 1920, has been very seriously ill for a considerable time. Recently he was transferred to a sanatorium in Moscow. The information has reached us that treatment in a good sanatorium costs about 160 roubles a month (\$80). This case is very special because of the urgent need for aid.

MARIA POLIAKOVA, together with her little child, was transferred to some place in the Uralsk region that contains only 4 huts, and where mail reached but once a year.

VICTOR SERGEYEV, for a considerable time an exile in Archangel, was recently arrested there for alleged correspondence with friends abroad and transferred to Tiumen in Siberia. On a similar charge ANTON SHLIAKHOVOY, a Tula exile, was returned to Moscow and thence ordered to the polit-isolator in Upper Uralsk. His wife Basya, with a 2 month old baby is an exile in Tula.

ALEXANDER LEVANDOVSKY, arrested in 1924 in Saratov, has been sent to the uppermost North, for an unknown period. There is also exiled the woman revolutionist S. RAKHMANKULOVA.

In Archangel, the well-known Anarchists IVAN TARASUIK and A. SINITZIN, were arrested "temporarily." Other local exiles who were transferred are: ELISEEV, ZHERONKOV and LAVRENTEV, to Shenkursk; POLIKALOV, LOPATIN and two peasants in sympathy with the Anarchists were taken to Onega; BRONZEV and a Social-Democrat (name undecipherable) were sent to Mesen.

EFIM DOLENSKY, BORIS KLUCHEVSKY, RAYA SHULMAN and a number of other exiles in Tashkent were suddenly transferred from that hot climate to the extreme cold of Upper Uralsk. MARK NEKHAMIN was ordered from Saratov to the Khirgisia for 3 years. GAIDOVSKY and his wife, exiles in Gambetta (Ural District) well-known in circles of revolutionary Esperantists, were again arrested and kept in prison without any charge against them for over two weeks. MME. GAIDOVSKY was placed in a cell occupied by ordinary, non-political prisoners, all of them men.—MIKHEEV, a Social-

Democratic workman, an exile in the village of Turgai, repeatedly petitioned the authorities for permission to visit the nearest city (Aktubinsk) for medical aid, the prisoner suffering from cancer of the stomach. Permission was refused, and now—just a few weeks from the expiration of his sentence—Mikheev died.

Recent information is to the effect that AARON BARON has again been transferred from his last place of exile in Eniseisk to some obscure spot in the far Turukhansky Kray, where mail reaches but 2 or 3 times a year. The Bolsheviks are evidently doing their very best to torture our old comrade. Since 1920 BARON has been continuously in prison and subjected to petty persecution and frequent changes of climate, that has transformed the once strong man into a physical wreck.—ALEXEI OLONETZKY, arrested in November, 1920, together with A. BARON, I. TARASIUK, M. BIRULIN, LEA GOOTMAN, and number of other Anarchists, is still held in the "polit-isolator" of Tobolsk. The long years of imprisonment have entirely broken his health. Now our comrade is suffering from acute rheumatism and heart trouble.

(Ibid)

THE CASE OF LAZAREVICH

In previous issues we referred to the arrest and imprisonment of the well-known Anarcho-Syndicalist Lazarevich. The Communist press at first denied that the man was arrested; later it admitted the fact, but claimed that he was particularly well treated in prison. The charges of his mistreatment were emphatically denied by the official Communist papers (for instance "L'Humanite," No.10, 148).

In the course of time some prominent literary persons in France made sharp protests against the imprisonment of Lazarevich, which led to a copious correspondence with Rakovsky and finally resulted in the release of the prisoner. Thereupon Lazarevich was deported from Russia and has at last reached France. We had the opportunity of meeting the man and getting the facts of the case, which follow:

Lazarevich was arrested on the street in Moscow, on October 8, 1924. Almost the entire time since he was kept in prison without any trial or hearing whatever, without even any charge. It was known that he held certain opinions, not even political, but rather economic and syndicalist.

The entire time he was incarcerated in solitary and subjected to extremely severe treatment. The prison regime was cruel, and upon

one occasion he was brutally beaten by the keepers and put into a strait-jacket.

Lazarevich declares that his case was by no means exceptional. It was not "a sad misunderstanding." Hundreds of politicals are in a similar position—arrested without charges and systematically persecuted. Incidentally, Lazarevich informs us that at one time his prison neighbor in the Butyrki (Moscow) was our well-known comrade Mochanovsky, frequently mentioned in the Bulletin. It is now 5 years since Mochanovsky was first imprisoned; he is kept in strictest solitary, though a very ill man.

The present regime in the Butyrki prison—Lazarevich relates—is one of utmost severity. The politicals are kept in isolation. One may not leave one's cell, nor stand at the window or communicate with fellow prisoners. Exercise, for each political separately, is allowed for one hour daily. Loud talking, singing, or tapping is punished by the dungeon, as in the days of the Tzar. Correspondence and visits are very limited. The food is insufficient. Lazarevich himself, in his physical appearance, bears witness to all these facts: he looks exhausted and ill from undernourishment.

(Ibid)

THE LETTER FROM AN EXILE

Dear Friends:—We are glad to be able to send you the news just received. K. and S., about whom we worried so much, not having heard from them for such a long time, have at last given a sign of life. Both are in poor physical health. We had to scold them for having sent to others the \$20 they received from you. We know how badly they and the friends with them need it themselves. Most of them have no support whatever. It is particularly terrible there on account of the children, as you know. And the population of exiles is growing because of the new political arrivals. Among the latter is a student girl who came three weeks ago, with several others, most of them very ill. One suffers with his lungs, another from heart trouble. . . . One of our friends was sent away to a worse place recently, because he refused the offer made by the Assistant Chief of the G. P. U. to become a spy on his comrades. This method is often practiced. Especially the young prisoners are so approached by the G. P. U. Refusal means worse conditions and exile further on. Things are beginning to look very ominous. Politicals from the extreme South are sent to the coldest North. You can

imagine what suffering it involves, particularly in view of the fact that no warm clothing is supplied and often no time given to prepare for the long journey. M. is soon expected here—after having been in the Solovietzki, Uralsk and . . . L., N., and several others are already in . . . polit-isolator. R. is in Siberia, and others are to follow there, according to our information. We fear to think of who is to come next. . . .

(“The Bulletin of the Relief Fund of the International Workingmen’s Association for Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists Imprisoned or Exiled in Russia” No.1, December, 1926. Paris-Berlin).

1927

BEATING POLITICALS

The Upper-Uralsk polit-isolator contains 200 politicals, including 50 women. About 80 of the total are Social-Democrats, 60 Anarchists, 38 Zionist-Socialists, the rest are so-called non-partisans. The prisoners are assigned to cells (containing 8 persons each, communication between the different cells being forbidden. The regime is severe. The starostat system, (the politicals of every faction having a collective representative to deal with the authorities) that prevailed in the Solovietzki Islands, had been abolished. This circumstance is naturally to the detriment of the prisoner, making him more helpless against abuses. It is also to a great extent responsible for more frequent trouble.

The arbitrary practice of the authorities in the assignment of cells is a continuous source of dissatisfaction and friction. This has recently led to unspeakable outrages committed against the politicals in Upper Uralsk. The circumstances were as follows:

The non-partisan workingman Beliankin was placed in a cell occupied by 4 Georgian Social-Democrats. The Georgians, speaking Russian imperfectly, used to converse among themselves in their native tongue. In consequence, Beliankin felt himself isolated and requested to be transferred into another cell, or into solitary. His demand refused, Beliankin declared a hunger strike. He was entirely ignored by the prison management, till the seventeenth day of his strike, when he was removed from his cell for forcible feeding. The other politicals protested against this by creating "obstruction" for about five to ten minutes, during which time they beat with their tables and stools against the doors.

Within a few minutes the prison was filled with the special guards of the G. P. U. who immediately forced themselves into the cells and began throwing their contents into the corridor. The politicals did not resist, not wishing to precipitate any bloodshed, in view of the fact that the Chekists were all armed, and some of them drunk. But the activities of the G. P. U. guards did not stop there. After the cells were all emptied, the Chekists attacked the prisoners. They began forcibly undressing them, the while beating the victims. Not

only the men, but the women prisoners were similarly treated. The proceedings in the female cells were accompanied with terrible scenes of brutality. They would pick up a woman bodily, one guard tearing off her things, another pulling off her stockings, while the other Chekists indulged in vulgarity and cynicism.

One of the women, the S. R. Ksheshnevskaya, was knocked down and beaten into unconsciousness for daring to protest. The Zionist-Socialist woman Holtzman and several others suffered similar treatment. The Social-Democrat Dalinsky was badly thrashed for trying to protect his wife. Also Dichter and his wife Venger. Even the sick politicals did not escape brutal handling.

For three days the Chekists continued the beatings.

Every day they would force themselves into the cells, the corridors, and even into the toilets, to practice their sadism. The slightest pretext, and often no pretext whatever, was sufficient to start the violence anew. Thus one prisoner was beaten for saying to his keeper, "I am ready," after he had carried the night bucket out of his cell and cleaned the same. Whereupon the other occupants of the man's cell were also beaten—on the ground that no talking was permitted and that the entire cell was responsible for the behavior of each occupant. The Petrograd students sent away in 1925 on the charge of being members of the Social-Democratic Labor Party (among them Levitzky, Tarassov and others) suffered most of all from these brutalities.

Since then, the prison authorities have been doing everything in their power to antagonize and incite the politicals.

The use of the toilet is allowed for only 20 minutes—for the occupants of each cell, collectively. The guards actually force themselves into the toilets, even when occupied by women, and drag the occupant to his cell, irrespective of his or her condition. The women in particular have been brought to such a pass that they now refuse to go to the toilet to wash up.

The least infraction of the prison rules, even if accidental or unavoidable, is punished with the dark cell and often with a beating. The prisoners are deliberately being driven to desperation, and it will not be surprising if tragic events soon occur in the Upper Uralsk isolator. A general hunger strike of the entire prison is most likely—a desperate means of protest, for in this case particularly it means a strike to the very end, as a result of which some of the politicals may suffer death.

(*"Bulletin,"* No. 2, March, 1927).

TOBOLSK POLIT-ISOLATOR

It is exceedingly difficult to get information about what is happening in the various prisons of Russia. In this connection the Tobolsk polit-isolator is one of the worst places. But through a favorable combination of circumstances we have now succeeded in getting information about recent events in that Bastille. These concern particularly the transfer of two Anarchists, Axelrod and Gurevich, from the Tobolsk prison to Moscow, to face framed-up charges of assaulting a prison guard.

The circumstances surrounding this case sufficiently characterize the pettiness and underhand work of Bolshevik persecution of political opponets.

For some time past the authorities of the Tobolsk polit-isolator have been making the lives of the politicals unbearable. The Anarchist prisoners occupy Cell No. 6, and one morning, about 10:30, the usual time for going to the lavatory, the men were informed that it was in use. They waited patiently, repeatedly reminding the keepers of their need. This continued till 3 in the afternoon, though never on previous occasions was the toilet engaged by one person for more than 15 minutes. Realizing at last that something was wrong, and compelled by insistent demands of nature, the occupants of Cell 6 began to knock on the door in order to call the guard. Instead of the guard on duty, a keeper responded accompanied by several officers. The situation was explained to them, but they refused the Anarchists admission to the toilets. It is necessary to mention that by this time, it being late afternoon, the cell bucket had become over-filled—to empty it at once was a hygienic necessity. The keeper informed Cell 6 that they would get permission within 15 minutes. When, however, half an hour passed without results, the men called again. They were again told to wait another 15 minutes, to which they consented, not wishing to provoke trouble. More time passed with the same result, or rather lack of result. The men called again and when the keeper appeared and again refused to let them out, they emptied the contents of the bucket into the corridor.

After about an hour there appeared the Chief of the Isolator, a certain Shamovich, who demanded to know the name of the perpetrator of the act. He was informed that the action was collective, no single person being responsible. Shamovich high-handedly ordered the entire cell to be subject to special punishment, remarking at the same time that the persons who poured the contents of the bucket

over the keeper would be turned over to the courts. He was informed that no such thing had happened: that the bucket was simply emptied into the corridor. On the following days the members of Cell 6 sent a written protest to the District G. P. U., demanding that the repressions imposed upon them by the Chief of the Isolator be rescinded and declaring a collective hunger strike till this be done. For 8 days the men continued to strike, no person in authority visiting the cell. On the ninth day Shamovich appeared, declaring that the prisoners' demand was granted, that no punishment would be visited upon them and that two men of their number, Axelrod and Gurevich, would be transferred to Moscow. Asked whether the transfer of the two prisoners did not signify some sort of repressions against them, Shamovich solemnly assured them that the order was only in compliance with the wishes of the named men who did not want to remain in the Tobolsk isolator but preferred some other place of imprisonment. In view of the fact that such transfers are nothing out of the ordinary, the politicals in Cell 6 did not suspect any four play.

But within a few days the men realized the full significance of the new order. Axelrod and Gurevich were taken to the District G. P. U. and there a charge of inciting insubordination among the politicals was made against them, on the ground that it was they who had poured the contents of the cell bucket over the prison guard. As a matter of fact the two men were not even those who carried out the decision of the cell, and—as already stated—the contents were not poured over the guard. But the accused men were not given a chance to explain and were taken to Moscow. We have just learned that they were declared common criminals and sent to Solovietzki Islands.

This new method of holding individual comrades responsible for the collective action of the politicals is becoming a frequent occurrence. The authorities no doubt hope by such means to stifle all protest against unbearable conditions. But they surely are doomed to disappointment. Even the Tzar did not succeed in breaking the spirit of revolutionists.

From a reliable source we have learned the names of some Anarchists imprisoned in the Tobolsk polit-isolator at the present time. They are:

Sokolov, Lisitzin, Belayev (brother of Nikolai who is an exile in Turkestan), Fissun, Shetzman, Dotzenko, Diakov, Lobe, Breinin, Smoliakov, Petrosin, Gromov. *(Ibid).*

WHERE IS VERA KEVRIK?

This woman Anarchist who has, in spite of her youth, a revolutionary past of considerable activity, seems to have disappeared leaving no trace behind. Financial aid sent to her a short time ago, while she was in exile in Biysk (Siberia), was returned to us by the forwarding agency on the ground that Vera could not be located.

Vera Kevrik, together with a number of other comrades, was arrested in the latter part of 1921 and has been continuously in prison and exile ever since. She was interned in the Solovietzki Islands, subsequently released and exiled to Biysk. Thence she seems again to have been transferred; nothing has been heard from her for a long time. Her peculiar disappearance looks very suspicious. We demand to know of the Soviet Government, *What has become of Vera Kevrik?*

(*Ibid*).

SOLOVKI REVIVED FOR POLITICALS.

Because of the great moral indignation aroused abroad in the revolutionary and labor circles by the outrages committed upon politicals in the Solovietzki Islands (Solovki), the Bolshveki Government finally felt compelled during the latter part of 1925 to abolish that hell hole in the Arctic as a political prison. Politicals, including over 400 Anarchists and Socialists, were transferred to the mainland and thence distributed among various prisons and exiles. But the so-called common criminals remained there, to be slowly tortured to death, and politicals from conquered Georgia have lately been sent by the hundreds to those polar islands.

Now the Bolsheviki have decided to revive the Solovki for all politicals. By the end of November the G. P. U. had already sent there, besides the Georgian politicals, 14 Anarchists, the Social-Revolutionist Sorokin, the Left Social-Revolutionist Speransky, 2 Zionist-Socialists, and a number of members of the Union of Peasant Youth.

(*Ibid*).

DRIVING POLITICALS TO SUICIDE

Conditions in the Yaroslavl polit-isolator can be better imagined than described—conditions that have driven the peasant Anarchist Grigoryev to attempt suicide by means of burning himself alive.

Grigoryev, unable to bear the torture of the solitary cell, had repeatedly asked to be transferred and placed “even among the common offenders, because they have at least some employment.”

The other Anarchist prisoners in the isolator, realizing their comrade's desperate condition, appealed to the authorities to have Grigoryev placed together with his friend Kalimasov. The latter underwent a hunger strike for 7 days, in the hope of inducing the prison management to comply and thus save the life of Grigoryev. All appeals as well as demands, and even the hunger strike, were in vain. Despairing of securing relief and possessed of the fear of losing his mind, Grigoryev sought to make an end to his misery by setting himself on fire. He was carried from his cell in an unconscious condition. His subsequent fate is unknown.

(Ibid).

REPRISALS AGAINST KHARKOV POLITICALS.

Information has reached us that all the signatories of the Open Letter*) were ordered to Moscow and there imprisoned until the Government can pass upon their case. There is no doubt that severe additional punishment is to be imposed upon them for daring to lift their voices against inhuman treatment.

The Socialists and Zionist-Socialists imprisoned in Kharkov inform us that after the forcible transfer of a number of their comrades, in October last, to prevent their seeing the German labor delegation that was to visit the prison, the prison regime became very drastic. Within a month the strained relations between the authorities and the politicals broke out into a conflict. It was on November 10, that the politicals had learned of the impending exile of three of their number to Siberia. Upon inquiry they were assured by the administration that the date had not yet been set. But the very same day the three politicals were unexpectedly taken away—which meant that they were not prepared with warm clothing and other absolute necessities to withstand the Siberian climate. Their comrades asked to be allowed to bid the exiles good-by, but permission was refused. In protest the prisoners caused an "obstruction" by beating on their doors. Thereupon the guards forced themselves into the cells, accompanied by the chief keeper. They beat the men severely, and finally they threw the beds and mattresses out of the cells, leaving the prisoners to sleep on the cold and damp floor.

Four days later, while the prisoners were at their meal, the official Prosecutor Krainiy and the magistrate Paruak visited the prison. The inmates did not know of their presence. One by one they were called out of their cells on the pretext of a hearing or

*) See page 542.

a visit, and finally they were locked up in other cells, together with the common prisoners. Some of the politicals, who had not yet been called, realized the deception that was being practiced and refused to leave their cells. For that they were again beaten in the presence of Prosecutor Krainiy and carried out by force.

These incidents have since been followed by charges against the politicals for alleged resistance to the guards in the carrying out of their official duties. So it seems that beating politicals is now a part of the official duty of the prison administration. The charges are based on Paragraphs 86 and 58 of the Criminal Code. The victims have demanded an open trial, but it is quite certain that it will be refused them.

(This communication was signed in the original by 21 Socialists and Zionist-Socialists).

(Ibid).

ENDLESS HUNGER STRIKES

The Bolshevik practice of sending the wives of imprisoned politicals to different places of imprisonment than those of their husbands is designed to cause additional worry and pain to the victims. After having tried in every way to prevail upon the authorities to permit wives to be imprisoned in the same places as their husbands, the politicals are now compelled to resort to long-drawn out hunger strikes to secure their demands. Recently the Social-Revolutionist Ladzovsky had to undergo a 17-day hunger strike to have his wife imprisoned in the same place where he is serving time. The Social-Democrat Feodorov and the Anarchist Pokrovsky had to follow the same course to secure this comparatively insignificant consideration. Feodorov carried through a 17-day strike, while Pokrovsky was hunger-striking 22 days before their demands were complied with.

These incidents, very frequent now, shed light upon the "humanity" of the Bolshevik regime.

(Ibid).

ARRESTS IN LENINGRAD

A number of Anarchists were arrested last summer in Leningrad but so quiet did the authorities keep the matter that only now we have received information about it. It is probable that the arrests are in connection with the attempted murder of the notorious

Messing,*) Chief of the Leningrad G. P. U., known for his fiendish brutality. The attempt has been kept a dark secret by the authorities. The prisoners include: A. G. Goloulnikov, sent to Novo-Sibirsk; Kira Sturmer, Upper Uralsk; Boris Soloviev, to Kasakshtan, Kirghiz Republic.

Among the arrested are comrades of long standing in the movement, as Sofia Isebskaia, for instance, who had suffered exile under the Tzar. All of the prisoners were condemned administratively—that is, without trial and sentenced for the usual period of 3 years. *(Ibid).*

THE CASE OF GARIN

We have on numerous previous occasions exploded the Bolshevik claim that the mere holding of non-Communist views is not being persecuted. We have repeatedly cited cases of imprisonment and exile of politicals for entertaining opinions not in agreement with those of the ruling political party. Such persecution is practiced even in cases where the prisoner is known to be politically inactive. The recent arrest of F. G. Mikhailov-Garin is in line with this Bolshevik policy.

Garin, a blacksmith by trade, is an Anarchist Communist, and a man who has throughout his life been consistent with his ideas. A conscientious objector, he refused military service under the Tzar, was persecuted for it, and finally had to flee Russia. In 1917 he returned and became active in the Revolution, first in Petrograd and later in the Anarchist commune of Yaroslavl Province. In 1919 he was condemned to prison for 5 years by the Yaroslavl Military-Revolutionary Tribunal, as a conscientious objector. Two years later, in 1921, he was liberated from the Taganka prison, Moscow, as a result of the intercession of some of the delegates to the Trade Union International.

But last July, Garin was arrested again, in spite of the fact that he was in no way politically active. In October he was doomed to exile in Southern Siberia because of his Anarchist views and also because he happened to receive a letter from an exiled friend.

Garin's wife and three small children have been left entirely without support. Because of the prevailing unemployment their condition is very critical, and aid is urgently requested.

(Ibid).

*) Messing himself was arrested by Stalin in 1937 and was supposed to be tried together with Jakovleva and others after the Bukharin trial. His fate is unknown, he was probably shot.

IN MOSCOW

Comrade Ukhin, a member of the Anarchist publishing house, "Golos Trouda," was arrested in Moscow on the charge of "distributing illegal literature." The latter consisted of one copy of the Bakunin memorial issue of a book published by "Golos Trouda."

The publication had been officially passed by the censor, but confiscated by the G. P. U. on the day of its appearance. Upon inquiry, several high Bolshevnik officials declared that the action was undoubtedly due to some misunderstanding. The G. P. U., however, as the final authority in these matters, categorically replied: "If it was confiscated, then it should have been confiscated."

Ukhin was administratively sent to Tashkent for three years exile.

S. M. Silber, a working tailor who had been chosen by his union to attend the Workers' University in Moscow and who was arrested in 1923 and sent for three years to Tobolsk, was recently re-arrested in his exile, without stated cause, and transferred to the little village of Samarova, in the Tobolsk Province.

(Ibid).

ON THE ROAD TO KATORGA AND EXILE

Very severe new regulations have recently been established in some of the polit-isolators. For instance, the prisoner may write a letter only once every three months, and that only to "legal" relatives. As a result, a political may not correspond with his wife unless she bears his name!

A. Petrovski, a Moscow Anarchist exiled in 1925 to Turkestan, was again arrested there later, together with a number of other comrades, and sent about from prison to prison. Information reaches us that he has now been condemned administratively to three years solitary confinement.

The Anarchist Kolomasov, sailor and student in Moscow, who was lately in exile in Aktubinsk, has been arrested on the charge of an alleged attempt to escape and sent to prison for three years.

Alexei Olonetsky, an old-time Anarchist, who had just finished serving three years in the Upper-Uralsk prison, has been exiled to Turkestan.

The Anarchist woman Yelena Kashena has been exiled to Tula after having completed her three year exile in Cherdin.

Information reaches us from Chimkent (near Tashkent, Central

Asia) that all the Anarchist exiles in that place were arrested in May, 1926. They were charged with having issued a First of May leaflet on the occasion of the local festivities. A "decision" in their case was expected in September last, but so far the results of this "decision" are unknown. According to a late report, not yet verified, they have all been condemned to solitary confinement.

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Red reaction is as active in the Far East as in Russia proper. A regular Bolshevik razzia upon Anarchists has taken place in Vladivostok and the entire region up to Khabarovsk.

Not only Anarchists have become victims of Che-Ka zeal, but also persons merely associating with Anarchists. Those arrested are:

A. Borovikov, member of the Anarchist Communist group of Vladivostok, one of the founders of the international unions of the youth and an active participant in the rebel peasant campaign against the Whites, during 1918-1922. Together with him are arrested his peasant father, mother, brother and sister.

At the same time other Anarchists well known in the locality have also been arrested, most of them with a splendid record in the long campaigns against the counter-revolutionary generals that operated in Siberia in the first years of the Revolution. Among the prisoners are: S. Kasenniy, A. Karenev, S. Furlet, Pochepnia (an old peasant rebel 68 years of age) and others.

The arrests were carried out with utmost brutality: the old mother of Borovikov was beaten by the G. P. U. till she lost consciousness; A. Karenev was so mishandled that he sustained a fracture of two ribs, besides being so seriously internally hurt that he is expected to die.

It is feared that some of the prisoners may be executed.

(*The same "Bulletin," No. 3, June 1927*)

ANARCHIST VICTIMS OF BOLSHEVIK PERSECUTION

Everywhere the demand is being voiced for the liberation of the men and women who are suffering imprisonment or exile in Russia because of their loyalty to their ideals. If there still be the least spark of revolutionary integrity and political decency in the dictators of Russia, they would celebrate the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution by a general amnesty of all labor and political prison-

ers. Aside from right and justice, there could be no more sensible and practical gesture on the part of the Bolsheviki. For it is extremely near-sighted to believe that such a step would involve the least danger to the existing regime. On the contrary, it would revive the dying faith of the Russian masses in the revolutionary sincerity of the Communist Party and at the same time it would serve to inspire the international proletariat with the feeling and hope that the spirit of October is not yet entirely dead in the rulers of Russia.

We appeal to all labor and radical organizations, as well as to liberty-loving men and women in general, to unite their efforts for amnesty into a powerful international demand.

There are several thousand political prisoners in Russia. We hereby publish a list of Anarchists whose places of imprisonment and exile are definitely known at the present writing. Many names, previously repeatedly mentioned in our Bulletin, are omitted here for lack of space. The present list comprises only a small part of imprisoned and exiled Anarchists; it includes only the most recent cases and but very few of the older instances of the persecution of our comrades.

1. Artemenko, Konstantin—workingman; at present in exile in the village of Unkino, County of Kolpashev, Tomsk province, Narim (Siberia).
2. Akimov, D.—workingman; in exile in the Kara-Kirghiz Republic.
3. Astunin, P.—in Archangel, North Russia.
4. Akhrameyev, I.—peasant; after long imprisonment, now exiled to Ust-Sissolk, District of Kem, Northmost Russia. According to recent information, he is becoming mentally deranged as a result of brutal treatment.
5. Alimov, I.—in exile in Narim.
6. Baron, Aaron—well-known case; Anarchist of long standing with splendid revolutionary record. Suffered persecution under the Tzar. Since 1920 continuously imprisoned in Che-Ka prisons, in the Solovki, Yaroslavl and other places. Now, broken down in health, an exile in the hamlet of Karassino, Turkhansky District, Northmost Siberia.
7. Bayev, Nikolai—workingman; imprisoned since 1921, in numerous places; lately in exile in Kizil-Orda, Kasakhstan, Kirghisia. Just re-arrested and imprisoned. Also his brother Artem.
8. Blumin, Lev—recently finished his sentence in Beresov (extreme north Tobolsk province) and now exiled to Perm, Eastern Russia.

9. Budarin, I.—workingman; arrested in 1926 in Leningrad; exiled to Novosibirsk, Siberia.
10. Belash, Victor—workingman; arrested in 1920; in exile in Tashkent.
11. Biriulin, Michil—workingman; arrested in 1920; exiled in Ust-Sisolsk, District of Kem.
12. Breinin—in the Tobolsk (Wester Siberia) special prison of isolation for politicals, known as “polit-isolator”.
13. Bronziv—in Mezen, Archangel Province, Northwestern Russia.
14. Borovikov, A.—arrested in October, 1926 in Vladivostok and imprisoned there; later transferred to unknown destination.
15. Bianemin, L.—in exile in Beresov, in the extreme north of Siberia.
16. Dotzenko—workingman; imprisoned since 1921; now in the Tobolsk (Siberia) Polit-Isolator.
17. Dolinsky, Effim—workingman; spent many years in various Soviet prisons; now in the Polit-Isolator in Upper-Uralsk.
18. Diakov—workingman; in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
19. Eliseyeva, L.—Anarchist woman; in exile in Archangel.
20. Feodorov-Puntzov, A.—workingman; in prison since 1920; now in the Yaroslavl Polit-Isolator.
21. Furmet, C.—participated in the fights against Kolchak; member of the Vladivostok group of Anarchist-Communists. Arrested in October 1926 and imprisoned since.
22. Fissun—workingman; in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
23. Gaidovsky, S. and his wife—intellectuals, esperantists; arrested in September 1925 in Moscow; now in exile in the village of Dzhambetta, Ural Province.
24. Golubeva, Anna—arrested in the summer of 1926 in Leningrad; now in Novosibirsk, Siberia.
25. Gusev—peasant; in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
26. Gromov—workingman; in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
27. Goloulnikov—arrested in the summer of 1926; in prison in Tiumen, Siberia.
28. Grigoriev—peasant; according to the latest information, kept in the Yaroslavl Polit-Isolator. Attempted suicide in November, 1926.
29. Ganshina, E.—girl student; arrested in 1923, imprisoned in the Solovietzki Islands and other prisons; now in Kolpashevo, Narim, Siberia.

30. Gottman, Lea—well-known case; arrested in November 1920 in Kharkov during the legally held Anarchist Conference. Had suffered persecution as a revolutionist under the Tzar. Since 1920 in various prisons. Now an exile in the town of Zinovievsk.
31. Isebskaja, S.—woman physician; arrested in the summer of 1926 in Leningrad; exiled to the hamlet of Kargasok, Narim, Siberia.
32. Kurganskaia, N.—workingwoman; imprisoned in the Solovki and other places for a long time. Now exiled to Tula, together with her two small children.
33. Kulikov—workingman; arrested in Rostov; now in Kzil-Orda, Kazakhstan.
34. Kosov, V.—in the Polit-Isolator in Verkhne-Uralsk (Upper Uralsk), Siberia.
35. Kamkhi, M.—student of the military academy; formerly a Communist; in the Lefortov prison, Moscow.
36. Kalimassov; in the Yaroslavl Polit-Isolator.
37. Kochetov, U.—arrested in the summer of 1926 in Leningrad, exiled to Saratov.
38. Linitzky—exiled to Ust-Sisolsk, Zyrianski District.
39. Krichevsky, Boris—workingman; in the Upper-Uralsk Polit-Isolator.
40. Kevrik, Vera—after imprisonment in Solovki, exiled to Biysk, Siberia. Fell dangerously ill. All information refused by the authorities. Probably dead.
41. Kusaiain—~~in~~ Obdorsk, Narim, Siberia.
42. Kasenniy, V.—fought in the campaign against Kolchak. Organized in 1917 the woodworkers union in Vladivostok; member of an Anarchist group there. Arrested in October 1926 in Vladivostok; further fate unknown.
43. Korenev, A.—fought against Kolchak, organized the Union of Youth in Vladivostok; arrested there in 1926, badly beaten: two of his ribs being broken. Imprisoned by the Vladivostok authorities.
44. Kashina, Ekaterina—after having been imprisoned in various places, exiled to the city of Tula.
45. Kuznetzov—workingman; an exile in Archangel.
46. Liakh, Ekaterina—woman student; took seriously ill during her long imprisonment in Solovki and other prisons. Now in Velikiy-Ustiug.

47. Levandovsky, Alexander— intellectual, well-known in esperantist circles. Arrested with his wife in Saratov in 1924. Now in exile in Obdorsk, Uralsk District, Siberia.
48. Lebedev, Leonid—workingman; arrested at Anarchist Conference in Kharkov, in November 1920. Imprisoned in the Solovki and other places; now an exile in Kolpashevo, Tomsk Province, Siberia.
49. Lebedev, Yossif—workingman; arrested in Yekaterinoslav. Now exiled to Kzil-Orda, Kasakhstan.
50. Lobe, Arthur—workingman; in the Polit-Isolator of Tobolsk, Siberia.
51. Lisitzin—workingman; in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
52. Lopatin—peasant; exiled to Onega, Province of Archangel, Northwestern Russia.
53. Lavrentiev—exiled to Shenkursk.
54. Lukianchikov—exiled to the Narim District, Siberia.
55. Mochanovsky, Feodor—workingman; well-known case. Since December 1922 in the Butyrki Prison, Moscow, in complete isolation.
56. Markova, Ekaterina—exiled to Akmolinsk, Siberia.
57. Malov—in prison in the city of Odessa.
58. Moshin—exiled to Shenkursk.
59. Nemeritzky, Boris—in exile in the hamlet of Parabel, Narim, Siberia.
60. Naumov—in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
61. Nakhankes, Mark—exiled to Kirghisia.
62. Olonetzky—a student; arrested in Kharkov in 1920; imprisoned in various places for years; now an exile in Tashkent.
63. Polosova, Tatyana—co-worker of the “Golos Trouda,” Anarchist publishing house. Imprisoned since 1923, now exiled to Tver.
64. Poliakova, Maria—woman student; arrested in Leningrad in February 1925, at present in the hamlet of Khantaik, Turakhansky Kray, Siberia.
65. Petrosin—imprisoned in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
66. Pokrovsky, A.—student; exiled to Aulaato, in the Kara-Kirhgiz Republic.
67. Polikalov—peasant; exiled to Onega, Archangel Province.
68. Pisarevskaja, E.—woman student; exiled to Tver.
69. Pochepnia—arrested in October 1926 in Vladivostok; a peasant 68 years of age, imprisoned, place unknown.

70. Poliakov—exiled in Beresov, extreme north of Siberia.
71. Reidman, Iuda—after years of imprisonment, now exiled to Parabel, Tomsk Province, Narim (Siberia).
72. Stepnaia, Dora—imprisoned many years in the Solovki and other places, now an exile in Archangel.
73. Sergejev, Victor—workingman; imprisoned and afterwards exiled to Archangel, he was punished for corresponding with his comrades abroad by being transferred to Tiumen, Ural District, Siberia.
74. Riss, S.—an exile in the Narim District, Siberia.
75. Solntzeva, E.—workingwoman; arrested in Vologda, now in Beresov, extreme north of Tobolsk Prvince, Siberia.
76. Solntzev, N.—teacher; arrested in Vologda, now in Beresov, Siberia.
77. Soloviev, B.—arrested in Leningrad in 1926; now exiled in Kasakhstan.
78. Smoliakov—workingman; in the Tobolsk Prison-Isolator.
79. Sokolov, Sergei—arrested in Leningrad in 1926, now in the Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
80. Strokach—arrested in Leningrad in 1926, now in Tobolsk Polit-Isolator.
81. Shapiro, Rachil—exiled to Kzil-Orda, Turkestan.
82. Shapiro, I.—workingman; exiled to Surgut, Narim, Siberia.
83. Sturmer, K.—woman Anarchist; arrested in the summer of 1926 in Leningrad, now in the Upper-Uralsk Polit-Isolator.
84. Terekhin—an exile in Tobolsk, Siberia.
85. Tiurin, A.—exiled to Surgut, Narim, Siberia.
86. Tarasiuk-Kabas, Ivan—well-known case; arrested in Kharkov in November 1920; imprisoned since then in various places, including Solovki. Now in prison in Petropavlovsk, Turkestan.
87. Charin, Ivan—similarly arrested in Kharkov in 1920, at the Anarchist Conference; imprisoned in Solovki and other places. Was freed because in a dying condition and exiled to Zinovievsk, Odessa Province.
88. Yurchenko, Peter—workingman; exiled to Archangel.
89. Veger, Maria—teacher; arrested in Leningrad in 1921; imprisoned in Solovki and in the Upper-Uralsk Polit-Isolator. Now an exile in Archangel.
90. Veger, Tamara—arrested in 1922 in Moscow. Upon the expiration of her imprisonment in the Upper-Uralsk Polit-Isolator, she

was sent into exile in the village of Kolpashevo, Narim, Siberia, where she now is.

91. Victorov, A. and wife—now exiles in Tobolsk, Siberia.
92. Verkhovskaja, M.—exiled to Viatka, North-eastern Russia.
93. Verba—peasant, Anarchist; in the Butyrki Prison, Moscow.
94. Voronina, Ekaterina—workingwoman; arrested in the summer of 1926 in Leningrad; exiled to Turkestan.

(*The same "Bulletin," No. 4, November, 1927*).

THE SACCO-VANZETTI CASE IN RUSSIA

Now comes the news of the arrest of Comrade Warshavsky, a well-known Anarchist of Odessa, on the charge of having in his possession a leaflet in behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti.

The leaflet contains an appeal to the workers to protest against the judicial murder by the State of Massachusetts and calls upon the international proletariat to boycott American products and protest to U. S. official representatives in foreign countries. The appeal concludes with a reference to the Bolsheviks keeping in prison and exile the Russian comrades of Sacco and Vanzetti while at the same time the Communist Government pleads for the friendship and favor of the American financial and commercial plutocracy. "Fellow-workers," the leaflet reads, "while protesting against the murder of Sacco and Vanzetti, do not forget their comrades imprisoned and exiled in Russia. Demand the right to propagate in our country the ideas for which Anarchists in every land are sacrificing their lives. Demand freedom of speech for those who are struggling in our country for the right of the workers to strike, for the liberty of labor union and co-operatives independent of the State, for free Soviets and the coming day of true liberty.

Obviously not a very "counter-revolutionary" leaflet, not even anti-Soviet. Yet for this leaflet people are arrested and imprisoned as "enemies of the proletariat". May those who defend "the Bolsheviks, right or wrong", stop and ponder what cause they are serving by justifying Bolshevik terrorism as directed "only against the bourgeois and counter-revolutionist".

In connection with this case it is interesting to read the letter addressed by Olga Taratuta to the Odessa G. P. U. Olga Taratuta is one of the best known Anarchists in Russia, famed for her life-long service and devotion to the cause of revolution. During the Romanov

regime she was sentenced to a long term at hard prison labor ("kat-orga"). She was freed by the Revolution of 1917.

The following excerpts from Olga Taratuta's letter show the indomitable spirit and wonderful courage that still animate the true Russian revolutionists in spite of all Bolshevik terrorism. She writes to the G. P. U.:

"While you are trying to exterminate all the Anarchists without sense or reason, why do you go about it in such an underhand and cowardly manner? If you are convinced that it is right for you to let all the Anarchists-idealists rot and die in prison, why do you get so excited when some one speaks about these facts or publishes them in the papers? If the Anarchist Appeal (the Sacco and Vanzetti leaflet) is criminal, then why don't you arrest me for it? If the two copies of the Appeal found in my possession are not criminal, then why did you arrest those two comrades who, as you well know, had nothing to do with the publication and distribution of that leaflet?

"The shameful practice of the continuous persecution of Anarchists during the past ten years has stamped you as criminals even from the viewpoint of the law which you yourselves have made. On the basis of what paragraph of your Criminal Code have you the right to keep those two Anarchists in prison now for six weeks, without having brought any charge whatever against them? You pretend that you arrested them in connection with some other matter, but it is a lie and you know it! Your purpose and methods are too obvious. The contents of the Appeal do not justify you in arresting Olga Taratuta, because you know that her arrest for it would cause too much protest in Russia as well as abroad. But because you are afraid of the effect the 'Appeal' may have among the Russian masses, you revenge yourselves by arresting two innocent victims.

"I herewith declare to you most emphatically that your action is so contemptible and outrageous that it must be made known to the masses. I announce to you that I will use every means in my power to inform the workers about the matter. Full well I realize the consequences of this, my declaration. But remember that the methods employed by the Tzar failed to accomplish their purposes. Neither will you succeed in killing ideas by bullet and prison. As concerns myself, it is the same to me whether you put me into the smaller prison or leave me in the large one into which you have turned Soviet Russia."

(*The same "Bulletin," No. 5, March, 1928.*)

LETTERS FROM EXILES

To the "Golos Truzhenika," Chicago, Ill., from comrade A. I. Baturo, exiled to Slobodsk, Viatka province.

To the editor of the "Golos Truzhenika":

I beg you to print in your paper the few lines I am sending you now.

I lived in the town Gomel, White Russia. In 1924, as you know, I was deported from America as an "undesirable element" for the bourgeoisie. But in the Soviet country also life is very hard for me since I openly declared that it is only Commissars and not workers that live well here. That is why I was not allowed to live in any of the larger cities, not even in the capitals of any of the provinces.

There are eight exiles here; there are Social-Revolutionists and Mensheviks. They were given three years. As for myself, I don't know for how long I was sentenced. It is Moscow that decided about it, but Moscow is not very much in a hurry about such business. I wrote to Moscow to allow me to go abroad, but there has been no answer yet.

The main thing is that I have no work and it is so hard to get anything. I have been actually starving here, moreover, I am sick. I am therefore asking you, my dear comrades, to help me out as much as you can, for otherwise the Soviet government will surely put an end to my life. It is a worse mockery than in America. Our Communists shout that workers are exploited abroad, but one need only look around to see what kind of exploitation is going on here.

Here is an example. Women work at the docks, unloading salt. For six hours work a day they get fifty cents. Isn't this exploitation of the worse sort? I beg of you to publish in your paper this letter with my appeal for help. Perhaps, some of the comrades will respond.

With comradely greetings,

A. I. BATURO.

(The Archive of the "Golos Truzhenika," the organ of the Russian Section of the I.W.W., 1919-1927, Chicago, Ill.)

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May 17, 1927.

Dear Senia,

. . . Zilber is already in Tver and has already found work, but he hasn't yet written me about it, although he promised a lot in this respect.

They say that disturbances took place in some of the prisons especially in Cheliabinsk. A group of Zionists and Georgian Social-Democrats were moved from Cheliabinsk to Tobolsk. There are also letters from some comrades who were sentenced to Vierkhnie-Uralsk, but for some unknown reason they had their correspondence rights taken away from them for a month. Altogether, there is something beneath this perturbation.

The poet who was mentioned in the last letters was said to have already arrived from Tobolsk. We were told that he came with the steamer, but no one answering this description was found there. But the person who saw him maintains definitely that he was brought over with the steamer. But think only of this "freedom of press, speech, etc.", when the only crime this man committed was being a bit loose with his tongue, more so than the government permits. Yes, damn it, sometimes the saying: "the prison entrance gates are wide, but the exits are narrow" is more than fitting in our cases. Upon the slightest provocation one finds himself at once in prison; but the reverse simply does not happen.

Here is, for instance, an example. A certain man by the name Studenetzky, a Social-Revolutionist, ended his term in Tobolsk prison February 10, and he is still in the "peresilnoy" prison (prisons used as distribution centers for prisoners and exiles) of the city of Perm. His letters show that the steamer leaves for his destined place of exile in June. So figure out how much additional time this man is serving for no reason at all. This happens here quite often.

Today three exiles came to us asking whether we have free rooms or work for them. They are Ukrainians and are not only politically undeveloped but are just illiterate peasants. Perhaps they were well-to-do at home but they could hardly be classed as dangerous in the party sense. They might have said something at one of the meetings and were arrested. They say that they were arrested for no reason at all, were kept in prison nine months and now they have been sentenced to three years of exile.

You can imagine the difference between this situation and the one described in last year's "Pravda". A British Bolshevik came out with a speech somewhere in the mines, calling upon the army not to shoot at workers. This landed him in prison for three years. "Three years of prison! Bloodsuckers! Hangmen!" . . . shouts out the paper, but here, right under our noses, a sentence of four and

ten years is nothing to speak of. But, what is worse, this is being presented as 100 percent Socialism.

When this is done in countries where the bourgeoisie rules, it is considered quite normal and natural. But when men allegedly fighting for "Socialism", fill up prisons in the name of the ideal, I cannot understand what "socialism" means nor and for what kind of "people's welfare" this is done.

Tragically, only that part of the population which has personally experienced this regime is aware of what is taking place. Well, anyway, let us hope that this will not last forever. Public opinion is beginning to stir already and only a spark is lacking for an explosion on a grand scale.

In my own personal life no changes have taken place. I am unemployed, as I was before, and I am oppressed by the realization that time goes by without my making much use of it. I would like to use this time to prepare for the revolution that is to come. But, there are no books here that I would like to read.

Kolia transmitted my request for reading matter to Moscow, but all I got was Kropotkin's "Ethics". With some effort, plenty of fiction can be obtained here, but of the more serious kinds there is nothing here outside the works of Lenin and Marx. One can get, of course, Stalin's "Leninism".

You seem to be interested in those who have already served their time. I told you who is in Tobolsk prison, but I did not write you who was there of those that "recanted"; whether they are still here or whether they have been released already—that I do not know.

Vania and Arkhangeltzi are not writing. Kolia writes that he is overworked and cannot write now. I would like to ask you to describe briefly the Anarchist movement abroad, that is if you have the time and opportunity. I will be very grateful to you if you do. And meanwhile accept my warm greetings.

Regards to all.

VICTOR SERGEYEV.

(*The Archives of the "Aid Fund," Chicago, Ill.*)

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Dear Friends: I am glad of the chance to reply to your last letter. But I feel very sad. . . . It seems that the conditions of our existence frequently incline one to a fatal pessimism, regardless of one's

temperament. Take, for instance, the case of young Spilka, in Chekment (Central Asia). He was only 20 years old, but he decided to put an end to the comedy of life. He drank a glass of poison. Then, not sure of its deadly effect, he hanged himself. Can you realize the psychic condition of that boy, with such determination to die? The day before his suicide he had himself photographed with the glass of poison in his hand and the rope around his neck. This shows what (*Several lines of the microscopic writing undecipherable—Ed.*)

Our other friend, Boris Lipsker, was also quite young and of a joyful, sunny disposition, and therefore his recent suicide surprised and shocked us. . . . Some may ascribe these and similar instances of increasing suicide among the exiles to inherent inclination. But that would mean to ignore entirely our fearful conditions of existence. They not only determine our mode of life, but even more so our death. . . . Excuse bad writing. Greetings. Your comrade. . . .

(“The Bulletin of the Relief Fund of the International Working Men’s Association for Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists Imprisoned or Exiled in Russia,” No. 4, Nov. 1927. Paris-Berlin).

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Friends, our comrade Y., who lives in the extreme north, just wrote me a letter that may interest you. I quote in part:

“In the Spring I was transferred to a little hamlet that contains only 60 huts. It is about 200 versts from the nearest village and more than 1,000 miles from any railroad station. The poverty here is incredible. You can’t buy anything. With my woman companion I go every day to the woods to search for any berries left from last year, such as vakcinion and oksikoko (red whortleberry and mosberry). This is our food. Unfortunately, there will soon be none even of that, and then we’ll have to wait for the new crop of berries and mushrooms. In the novels of Jack London I have read of the gold-seekers in the Canadian primitive forests who some time lost their way and have to subsist on berries, mushrooms and similar things. But I can tell you that it sounds much better in the novel than it is in real life. This is just as an instance of the way we live here. . . .”

The exiled in T. are almost all without employment. Sometimes they are refused work on the ground that they “are not members

of the union". But the union does not accept exiles as members. Again we are told, "We don't employ you, enemies of our government". Our comrades in S. are almost starving. In general, the conditions of our people in the upper North are most deplorable. In the region of Beresov, Surgut, Obdorsk (Siberia) we are almost never given a chance to work and earn something. And you know yourselves that the government allowance we receive is not even half-adequate, nor regular. The authorities pay railroad expenses of persons imported to fill certain vacancies, while the exiles could do the same work and even better, without the extra expense.

Y. Z.

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Thanks for the money you sent. We were very much moved by your thoughtfulness. At the place which I recently left . . . there is great need. M. is not earning anything, L. has very little, and R. is expecting a child. We have shared with them what you sent. K. is earning 30 roubles a month, which is no great amount, but still he keeps on sending packages of food and clothing to our people in the . . . prison. N. is in Turkhan with her husband and child. Conditions there are extremely bad. Great poverty, no earnings at all, climate severe and mail only twice or three times a year. In January we received a letter that was sent us the previous August. . . . Recently some of us were lucky enough to get jobs cutting wood and collecting nuts. We'd appreciate books and magazines.

C. T.

(*Ibid*).

1928

THE MILL OF THE BOLSHEVIKS

We published herewith excerpts from the news recently received by us directly from our correspondents in Russia.

NIKOLAI BELYAEV and ARTEM PANKRATOV, two Anarchist workers in exile at Ksyl-Orda, Turkestan, left their work in order to take part in the public protest which was held in behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti. Both were among the speakers that addressed the audience on that occasion, but the G. P. U. thought that they had "gone too far" in this condemnation of social injustice and judicial murder. For our two comrades did not stop with their criticism of outrages in America, but also protested against the suppression and political persecution practiced in Russia. Immediately after the meeting they were arrested. Thereupon they declared a hunger strike which lasted eight days. According to our latest information, Pankratov has been exiled to the village of Djambetta, Ural District, almost 200 miles distant from any railroad, a most isolated and forsaken place where SERGEI GAIDOVSKY and other comrades are also in exile. Nikolai Belayev has also been sent to Siberia, exact destination not yet known.

ALEXANDER GOUMENIUK who was in prison in Sverdlovsk, has now been condemned to exile in the Tobolsk District, Siberia. Comrade GERASSIMOV, who kept Goumeniuk company in Sverdlovsk, has been incarcerated in the Upper Uralsk prison for three years. The official "reason" given for the new administrative sentence is that Gerassimov, a studious young man, had been making "subversive" notes and calculations about the agrarian budget!

Comrade TOUMANOV was till recently an exile in the region of Zyriansk, extreme North. A short time ago he was arrested for an alleged attempt to escape and condemned to three years' prison. For protesting against the new sentence he has now been transferred to the Solovietzki Islands.

Another Anarchist, ORLOV, having finished his term of exile in Novorossiysk, was arrested and imprisoned in Sverdlovsk and shortly afterwards again sent, for unknown reasons, to Tobolsk.

Four other Anarchist comrades, whose names could not be ascertained so far, were taken out of the Tobolsk prison and ordered to Moscow.

NIKOLAI VICTOROV, an Anarchist of many years standing, recently completed his term of exile in the village of Samarovo. Instead of being liberated he was sent for six months to prison in Tobolsk, Siberia, for allegedly "insulting a policeman," whom he had called gendarme. At the expiration of that new sentence, was he liberated? Oh, no! In accordance with the established policy of the G. P. U. he has now been exiled together with his wife and small child to Saratov. Not being members of any union, neither Victorov nor his wife are able to secure work; on the other hand, they cannot join any union because as exiles they are forbidden by Bolshevik law to do so. Both are entirely without means of subsistence, and their case is further aggravated by Victorov's illness.

MARIA POLIAKOVA with her two children, and PAVEL USKOV have been transferred from Khantaik to Yenisseisk after having finished their terms of exile. They are now awaiting a new sentence, since the G. P. U. refuses to release them. To Yenisseisk has also been brought our old comrade AARON BARON, whose life during the past seven years has been one continuous round of imprisonment and exile. He also is expecting a new sentence.

We are informed that VICTOR SERGEYEV, an Anarchist long in prison and exile, has taken seriously ill. He is suffering from anemia and heart trouble, but is deprived of any opportunity for systematic medical treatment.

SERGEI SEMIN, upon having finished his term in the Upper Uralsk political isolation prison, has been exiled to Tver. He is in a most advanced stage of consumption, the general conditions of his exile are extremely severe. Though he is not expected to survive very long, the Bolshevik authorities refuse to free him.

LELYA PISAREVSKAYA, in exile in Tver, has fallen dangerously ill. According to the reports of our local correspondents, her material situation is of the worst. There are several Anarchists in exile in Tver, but only one of them has been able to get work and thus earn a scanty living.

S. CHUCHKOV, woman Anarchist, has been transferred from Ukhta to Izhma, the latter place notorious for the brutal beating up of the exiles by the agents of the G. P. U. in 1925. Five of our comrades are in Izhma at present, none of them permitted to secure employment.

SHURA ANDIN, woman Anarchist, exile in Ural District, is facing a major operation, which is to be performed without anesthetics

because of the patient's weak heart. In the same place is also our comrade ANTON SVETLOV with his woman companion.

To Irbit is exiled ELENA CHEKMASOV, who together with her sick child has spent the past seven years between prison and exile. Her exile is shared by VASYA SHIROKOV.

A. B. MAXIMOV, geographer and Syndicalist, completed his term in the Upper Uralsk Polit-Isolator and has been exiled to the town of Berezov, Tobolsk Province.

TATIANA POLOSOVA, a member of the Anarchist publishing house, "Golos Trouda," has been transferred together with her child from Tver to Poltava. She is without work and in great need.

POLIA KURGANSKAYA, in prison and exile since 1921, has been sent from her Tula exile to Krasnaya Poliana. Both her children are in precarious condition owing to years of undernourishment. Aid is urgently needed.

VASYA MAKHOV, who has now five years of prison and exile behind him, is exiled in Parabel, Tomsk District, Siberia.

Just as we are going to press information reaches us about the case of ALYA LILIENTHAL, the young woman comrade arrested last October in Leningrad. It has been definitely established now that the only charge against her is "connection with people in foreign countries". Those "connections" consisted of the most innocent correspondence with personal friends in France and America.

After having been kept in the Shpalerny prison for three months, comrade Lilienthal was told by the G. P. U. that she would be released on condition of signing a written statement forswearing Anarchism. This she categorically refused to do. Thereupon the G. P. U. condemned her to three years exile in Kasakhstan, one of the most dreaded places in Russia.

On January 3, 1928, she was sent to her destination by etape; that is, by nerve-racking slow stages, often by foot. To make the difficult journey more miserable, the accompanying chekists amused themselves by continuously insulting the young woman. As a result of deprivation and brutal treatment she *broke down* on the way.

Our correspondents call our particular attention to the deplorable condition of our comrades in Upper Uralsk, where there are quite a number of our people in prison and exile. One of them, who is suffering from consumption, has not sufficient clothing on to be able to take a walk in the prison yard. During the last two months

he has been compelled for that reason to stay all the time in his cell, ill and solitary.

(*Bulletin*, No. 5, March, 1928).

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO MOCHANOVSKY?

Last August our Relief Fund sent some money to comrade Mochanovsky, then imprisoned in the Butirky, Moscow. In the course of time the money was returned to us by the forwarding bank: Mochanovsky was no more in the Butirky.

This is what happened. Just before the arrival of certain foreign delegations in Moscow, an order was received at the prison to transfer Mochanovsky. Where to?

That is not known. But the "why" will be found in the following circumstances. During a previous visit of some "foreign friends of the Soviet Government", the latter assured the delegates that there were no Politicals kept in prison in Moscow. Upon the return of that delegation to France we were able to prove that on the very day that they received that assurance from the Government, the Anarchist Mochanovsky was in the Butirky prison. We demonstrated it by producing the original receipt signed in the Butirky prison and proving that Mochanovsky not only was there but that he actually received the money we sent him.

Evidently the Bolsheviks took note of the matter. Now foreign delegates do not find Mochanovsky any more in the Moscow prison. But what have the red executioners done to Mochanovsky?

(*Ibid*).

THE TORTURE OF POLITICALS

We have previously reported the case of Isia Shkolnikov, the Anarchist workingman, who has for years been the victim of Bolshevik persecution. Briefly the history of Shkolnikov is as follows:

An active Anarchist of long standing, he participated in the radical labor movement during his sojourn in the United States; but at the outbreak of the Russian Revolution he returned to his native land in 1917. There he devoted all his experience and energy to the revolutionary work in various parts of the country and was known as a most loyal and effective worker in the cause. In 1921, during the wave of wholesale arrests of Anarchists, Isia Shkolnikov was also imprisoned, being at first held for a considerable time in the special jails of the Cheka. Finally he was sent to the Solovietzki Islands, and thence transferred to another prison island. After several years

of incarceration our comrade was ordered into exile, though not once during all that time has any definite charge been made against him. He was simply considered an Anarchist and as such either prison or exile was the place for him.

In his distant exile Shkolnikov led a miserable existence, suffering from lack of proper clothing and insufficient food, yet hoping that he would now at least be left in peace by the Cheka. But unexpectedly he was again arrested, no reason being given, as usual. He was informed that he was to be transferred to some other place of exile, but he was taken to Moscow instead and there placed in the cellar of the Butyrki prison. For almost five months he was kept in absolute isolation in the underground cell, without permission to receive any visits or the customary packages of food from friends. He suffered repeated attacks of rheumatism in a most severe form, and soon his general health was shattered. Unable to bear such conditions any longer, Shkolnikov demanded to know the charge against him and petitioned also for a transfer from the cellar. Both requests were refused. Driven to desperation, Shkolnikov attempted suicide by setting fire to his mattress. He was very severely burned before the keepers saw what had happened and dragged him out of the dungeon. In spite of his terrible condition he was then condemned, without hearing or trial, to three years in the Polit-Isolator at Yaroslavl.

Two years have passed since the condemnation, and during that time we have received a number of letters from other politicals informing us of the continued torture of Isia Shkolnikov. And now comes the news that our comrade has been again transferred to Moscow and there placed in the psychiatric ward of the Butyrki. They have driven the unfortunate man insane.

(The same "Bulletin," December, 1928).

THE BEASTS

There is a small town, known as Minusinsk, in Southern Siberia, on the river Yenissei. To this place the G. P. U. has of late been sending politicals who are in bad health. In the colony of exiles there is the Anarchist Ritovsky who had tried to commit suicide while in the Upper Uralsk Polit-Isolator by cutting his veins. Ill treatment in prison had driven him to desperation, and when he was finally brought to Minusinsk he was in such weakened condition that he could hardly stand on his feet. The Bolshevik authorities of the

"health resort" refused Ritovsky permission to remain in the city and he was therefore taken to a nearby village, a wild and deserted place where there is neither hospital nor any medical aid. Ritovsky asked that his wife, who had accompanied him to Minusinsk, though she was pregnant at the time, be permitted to remain to take care of him. The G. P. U. not only ignored the request, but even ordered Ritovsky's wife exiled to the Tulunski District, hundreds of miles away, and that notwithstanding the woman's condition and the fact that it was in the midst of a most severe winter. Another woman political, Khana Nudelman, who is almost blind and imperatively in need of medical treatment, was treated in almost the same way. Under armed guard she was taken to an isolated hamlet eighty miles from Minusinsk. The Chief of the local G. P. U., whose name is Ivanov and who is a Moscow appointee, boasts that in political matters he knows no "distinction of sex".

The sick politicals know that they are faced with the fate of Beridze, a Georgian exile, who had been brought to Minusinsk suffering from internal injuries and severe hemorrhages as a result of an accident. He required immediate surgical attention, but the woman Communist in charge of the hospital declared that she "so hated the enemies of the Soviet Government that she would not permit them in her institution". Beridze was refused admission to the clinic and was placed in a cold, unheated corridor where he died within six days.

Not much more cheerful is the life of those exiles who are permitted, by the grace of the authorities, to remain in the city without being sent away to even more distant and forsaken places. Employment is out of the question, and they have to support themselves on the pittance allowed them, which amounts to six roubles and twenty-five kopecks per month (about three dollars). Even that is paid very irregularly and incompletely. Moreover, of late the exiles have been compelled to pay for medical attention.

But there is a group of politicals in Minusinsk which fares much better: it is the "aristocracy" of exiles consisting of prominent Bolsheviks, of the Opposition, among whom are Sarkiss, Smilga and others. They live under incomparably more favorable conditions, receive thirty roubles monthly and are a class by themselves. Needless to say, they are friendly to the administration and keep aloof from the other politicals.

The Minusinsk colony has grown considerably in recent months. Among the exiles there are at present the Anarchists Mikhail Pan-

flov, Samuel Ruvinsky, Nikolas Belayaev, Otto Ritovsky, Aida Bashevich and Nikolas Mukha. To them have now been added the Menshevik Pyatigorsky, brought from the Upper Uralsk Polit-Isolator; the Georgian Socialists Ossip Yemanidze and Elizabeth Balkvadze; the Social-Revolutionist Beresnev and the Zionist-Socialists Iosif Novikov and Khana Nudelman.

(*Ibid*)

IN PRISON AND EXILE

The well-known Anarchist author, F. T. Kizliakov, has been exiled to the villages of Djambetta, in the Uralsk District. According to our information the sole charge was the fact that the G. P. U. had found in Kizliakov's possession a considerable number of manuscripts (poems, sketches, etc.) and, particularly, a letter from Romain Rolland.

Tatyana Geraseva, a young Anarchist woman, having completed her prison sentence of three years has been exiled for a similar term to Kisyl-Orda, in Turkestan, Western Asia. During her imprisonment she has been a victim of consumption, and a recent medical examination found her to be "dangerously ill"; nevertheless, the authorities have refused to release her.

The Anarchist Vladimir Yegorov, after having been imprisoned for three years in the Uralsk Polit-Isolator has been ordered into exile in Tiumen, Siberia, for three years.

Twenty-two comrades who were in exile in Tobolsk, Siberia, have now been transferred to more northern points. Among them are Sasha Gomeniuk, a tubercular invalid, sent to the village of Surgout, which is about 275 miles nearer the Arctic than Tobolsk, and Irene Loseva, also a consumptive, taken to the hamlet of Samarovo, Northern Siberia.

Sergei Krasavin is exiled to Obdorsk, Siberia, for three years. For a similar period exiled are Prianishnikov to Samarovo, and Mikhailkov to Surgout.

Shura Andina has been ordered from Irbit, where she was undergoing medical treatment for a serious illness, to Kudimkor, in the Uralsk District. Vassiliy Kosov was also sent to the same place.

The brothers Alexander and Michael Badins have been exiled for three years to Djambetta, Uralsk District, after having finished their term in the Yaroslavl Polit-Isolator.

Our old comrade Illarion Sluchevsky has been transferred from Narim to the hamlet Temizhbekskaya, in the Armavir District.

Vera Yakovleva, having completed her sentence in Tobolsk has now been again exiled to the village Samarovo, Northern Siberia.

Ivan Krouglov, arrested in Moscow, was exiled to Tobolsk for three years.

Joseph Broverman recently finished his term in Archangel. He received from the G. P. U. the order of "minus six" which means prohibition to live in one of the six largest cities in Russia. He chose Melitopol, which is now his forced domicile.

Volody Belyaev completed his term in the Tobolsk political prison and has been exiled for three years to Narim, Siberia. A. Gousev, from the same prison, has been ordered into exile to Minusinsk. In the latter place there are nine comrades, but only one of them has been able to secure employment.

Alexander Pokrovski and Clara Federmeer, both of whom had finished their sentences in the Yaroslavl Polit-Isolator, have now been exiled for the usual three years to Narim, Siberia. From the same prison Boris Lipovetzky has been sent to Uralsk for a similar term.

The young Anarchist Krasnov, a pupil of the Lomonosov Institute in Moscow, is exiled to the far-off village of Guriev, in which he is the only political prisoner.

The nine Anarchists arrested in Petrograd in 1925 have now finished their terms in the Yaroslavl prison. Four of them have been ordered into exile: three to Siberia and one to Ural.

Three Tolstoyan non-residents have been exiled for three years to Northern Siberia.

The Anarchist A. Kalimosov has been sent for three years to the small hamlet of Altay, in the Achinsky District, one of the most isolated parts, and to the same place is exiled also our comrade Korolevich. We are informed that both are entirely without means, often compelled to go for days without food.

In the village Lepsinsk, in the far Siberian North, there is a colony of eight politicals, among them Yakob Lang, G. Zaidina (a woman), M. Svidovsky and A. Nekhamkin.

The Anarchist D. S. Boshko and two Zionists are in Khodzheilakh, a spot in the most north-western part of Siberia, hundreds of miles distant from any railroad. In Turt-Kul, of the same region, there are exiled L. A. Mechnikov, a Tolstoyan.

The regime in the polit-isolator is constantly growing worse. After every official visit of the G. P. U. Inspector Andreyeva, who is no-

torious for her sadistic tendencies, the prisoners are subjected to some new persecutions. Lately they have been forbidden to correspond with the outside world, as well as to receive packages or books, except from near relatives. Candy, chocolate, dried fruits and vegetables are prohibited to the inmates. Exercise in the fresh air has been reduced to a minimum. Especially inhuman are the regulations regarding the use of the toilet. Only twice daily are the prisoners permitted to visit the toilet, and not only male but also female prisoners are compelled to attend to their needs in the presence of the male keepers. To the insistent protests against this indignity the prison administration has replied: "It doesn't matter, the keepers are married men".

Against these unbearable conditions the politicals have been protesting frequently of late by prolonged hunger strikes, but mostly in vain. A short time ago the well-known old Social-Democrat Strukov committed suicide in the Upper Uralsk Polit-Isolator by throwing himself down the prison stairs. Strukov had spent many years in prison and exile, and only recently he went through a twenty-five day hunger strike.

(Ibid).

LABOR LEADERS TURN CHEKISTS

A very significant item has appeared in the official organ of the central Soviet of Trade Unions, which is the Russian Federation of Labor. Under date of August 16 the "Troud" ("Labor") writes:

"Persons condemned to exile, whether by judicial sentence or administratively, cannot be members of a labor organization. Such persons are not to be accepted into a union or, if already members, they must be excluded."

It means that not only ordinary offenders convicted by the courts but also revolutionists exiled administratively (without trial or hearing) must not be permitted to secure employment, since those who do not belong to a trade union have little chance of getting work in Russia. This announcement by the official organ of the Central Labor Soviet practically dooms the political exiles to starvation, because the government allowance of 6 roubles 25 kopeks per month is not even sufficient to keep body and soul together.

We have known all along that the G. P. U. is systematically depriving the political exiles of all means of employment. We have also known that the Russia labor leaders are mere gramophones trans-

mitting the orders of the reigning political party. But now they have become lackeys doing the dirty work of the Cheka. The Tomskys, Losovskys and Melnichanskys have joined hands with the G. P. U. —against their former fellow-revolutionists!

(*Ibid*).

THE LETTERS FROM PRISONS AND EXILES

Dear Friends: I am glad of the chance to send you this, in the hope that it may reach you. . . . In the Sverdlovsk prison the politicals are already in the second week of a hunger strike. It was declared in protest against the administration's new practice of placing the politicals in cells of the non-political, ordinary prisoners. Our people demand to be transferred to the political wing of the prison. Lately more repressive measures are being applied to the politicals under the guise of "reforms". In the Uralsk Polit-Isolator the regime is getting all the time more severe. At every transfer there is always trouble with the authorities. At the "counting", for instance, some of the officials indulge in abuse and brutal arbitrariness toward the politicals. . . . In Tobolsk the "registration" is carried on by the warden himself who subjects the politicals to "examinations" and "hearings" that are inquisitorial in character and insultingly unbearable. It has come so far that we live in constant dread of his very approach. . . .

(*Bulletin of the Relief Fund* . . . December, 1928).

(*Below are excerpts from several letters received by us from N., a comrade of long standing and activity in the movement. In 1912, when still a youth, N. left Russia to work as a sailor. He visited almost every maritime country in South America, as well as Portugal and other South European lands. A Revolutionary Syndicalist, he presently became the object of persecution by the authorities of Argentine, Brazil, Portugal, etc., from which countries he was deported, at various times. After fifteen years of that life, Comrade N. finally decided to return to Russia, visit his parents, and find permanent work and rest. His letters from the "paradise of workers" breathe disappointments, despondency and despair*).

June, 1928. . . . No work yet. It seems impossible to get a job, and I have finally decided to go to Moscow. Will have to travel by

foot. . . . Russia is large and maybe I shall be able to pick up some odd work on the road. . . . There were meetings here of the unemployed and at one of them I also spoke. As a result I have already been "called on the carpet" five times. The G. P. U. always comes at night, when I am in bed. . . . I fear all this will end badly, but I cannot dwell on this matter in letters—I am in a "proletarian" land. . . .

July, 1928. Four months here already, but I cannot find work. It is a "peculiar" situation: they will not permit me to work as long as I am not a member of the union; but they will not accept me as a member until I have a job and have stayed on it at least 72 days. That is the rule. How to solve this dilemma? . . . Unemployment is very great in this city. In a population of 40,000, 10,000 are unemployed. The first to receive work are those unemployed who are getting some aid from the government while they are idle, but we who are "not members" get neither aid nor work. I have explained to them that I have been a member of a labor syndicate since 1914, but the authorities would not listen to it. Why? Because the syndicate to which I belong "is not a member of the Profintern"! (The Red Labor Union International). If I were an immigrant things might be better for me. But as I am a native Russian I enjoy full freedom to—starve. This is no mere phrase. It is quite literal. . . . I have already sold what decent clothes I had. Walking about almost in rags now. I have come to think that I would be better off in prison in Portugal than in this "liberty". My family is in a similar position. My father used to be a "melamed" (Jewish religious teacher), so of course he is now without work and is being supported by his brother. The latter, who is a man with a family earns only 48 roubles monthly (about 24 dollars), from which amount are deducted the payments into the union, the Party, for the aerial fleet, and other similar things. . . .

August, 1928. I returned from Kharkov today. How did I happen to be there? Well, I had been "visited" almost every day, and finally I was arrested and taken to Kharkov. There I was kept 20 days in jail and then I was ordered to return home. Now I am compelled to report every day at the offices of the G. P. U. They are still "investigating" the matter of my talk to the unemployed, and it looks as if things may turn out ill for me. . . .

(*Bulletin of the Relief Fund*, May, 1929).

1929

IN BOLSHEVIK PRISONS

(Related by a political who had spent considerable time in various Soviet prisons and who succeeded in coming abroad).

The two Moscow prisons in charge of the G. P. U.—the Lubianka and the Butirsky—are over crowded with politicals. They are compelled to sleep in fearfully congested quarters, the mattresses and bedding being veritable nests of vermin. The food is bad; the bread half-baked, mixed with indigestible ingredients. Occasionally there is soup or stew consisting of frozen potatoes and decayed vegetables, with now and then some meat offal. New political arrivals are placed together with ordinary criminals, and it requires several weeks of energetic protest before they are transferred to the political wing of the prison.

There are numerous workers and peasants among the politicals, as well as scores of Communists of the Opposition, foreign and Russian. The most prominent of them are kept in strict isolation, while the others—those of the rank and file—are permitted certain work, such as cleaning up the cells, assisting in the kitchen, distributing the rations, and so forth. It is interesting to mention that the attitude of the prisoners to the new political element—the Communist Opposition—in no way differs from their treatment of other new arrivals. They are neither shunned nor discriminated against. And, as a matter of fact, the Communist prisoners are generally even more bitter and antagonistic to the authorities than the other politicals.

Twice every month prisoners are transferred from Moscow to the Solovietzki Islands and to Kem, in the far North. Their number is usually so great that there are never enough railroad cars on hand to hold them all. Then one witnesses a sight that has become common: with the butts of their guns the G. P. U. agents force the prisoners into the cars. The Kem concentration camp now has over 18,000 prisoners, while 27,000 are in the Solovietzki. Conditions in Solovietzki are so fearful that it has been popularly christened the “red Sakhalin,” after the dreaded Sakhalin colony of Tzarist times.

Members of various political parties and movements are represented among the politicals: there are Socialists, Communists, Anarchists. A large percentage consists of workingmen condemned for

participation in strikes and peasants involved in agrarian troubles. There are men convicted in the Shakhtin (Don Basin) trial, with a goodly sprinkling of Trotzky followers and foreign Communists. Recently the Solovietzki population has been increased by a new batch of politicals, among them the poet and author Alexander Yoroslavsky. Without trial he was condemned to three years soon after his return from abroad, where he had spent the past two years working as a common laborer. His wife, who had lost both legs in a railway accident, is following him to Kem, in order to be somewhere near her husband.

Among the politicals one notices particularly a numerous group of Chinese students. They are the former pupils of the Moscow Oriental University, whose rector was Radek. They had believed his assurances that the Soviet Government would never betray the cause of Communism in China. During the critical days of the Chinese Revolution these students organized a street demonstration in Moscow: they protested against the Kremlin intrigues in China and demanded that the revolution be aided. Mounted Chekists broke up the demonstration, and the Chinese students were arrested. They have been in prison ever since, deserted by everyone and no one apparently caring what becomes of them. The most interesting point is that among these Chinese students is also the son of Chan-Kai-Chek, the young Communist who about a year ago denounced his father as a traitor to the revolution and publicly proclaimed Soviet Russia as his chosen fatherland. He was arrested as an opponent of the Comintern policies in China.

Another group consists of 13 German Communists who had come to Russia to "help the first labor republic to build Socialism." They landed in the Butirsky. Several of them are accused of "espionage in favor of the international bourgeoisie," while others continue in prison without any known charges having been made.

Foreign Communists must generally spend many months in prison before they succeed in getting in touch with some diplomatic representative of their country who would enable them to leave Russia. A number of those who finally secured their release and returned home relate that the agents of the G. P. U. practiced the following trick upon them: The foreign prisoner is called to the office, where he is introduced to a person, allegedly representing the embassy of his country. He is given the opportunity to fill out a questionnaire and the "representative" assures him that he may talk confidentially and entrust to him messages to his relatives and friends. After the interview

the prisoner is told that he will be released in a few days. Months pass without results. When the foreign Communist finally gains his liberty—this time actually by aid of his country's embassy—he learns that he had entrusted the confidential message not to a result of such infamy the foreign Communists have of late refused representative of his country but to an agent of the G. P. U. As a to be “interviewed” by alleged “diplomats.”

Among the group of the Shakhtin prisoners the most tragic case is that of one of the chief witnesses named Bashkin. Long imprisonment and the nerve-wrecking trial have unbalanced his mind. His comrades in the case tell of the continuous nightly “pumping” that Bashkin and others underwent at the hands of the G. P. U. in its attempts to force confessions out of them. Few, even the strongest men could mentally survive the agonizing night hearings, and particularly the experience of having the death mask placed over their heads, preparatory to being taken out to be shot. These were the Bolshevik third degree methods: leading men out at night to execution, going through all the harrowing formalities and then, at the last moment, returning them to their cells—only to have the performance repeated a few days later.

The death mask is the latest achievement of the G. P. U., now frequently practiced in its dungeons. It is not necessary any more to blindfold the victim before his being shot, and—it is less disconcerting to shoot at a mask than at the head of a living human. . . .

(ibid).

COLGOTHA

ALEXANDER KALIMASOV, a well-known Anarchist, exiled to a distant and almost deserted village, found himself there entirely without any means of existence. Driven by need he decided to walk to the nearest town in the hope of securing employment there. For having absented himself without permission from his “assigned zone” he was arrested and placed in the prison at Achinsk. After having been kept several months in strictest isolation he has now been exiled by order of the G. P. U. for three years to the Turukhansky District, a place in far-away Northwestern Siberia very sparsely settled by primitive Nomad tribes. Comrade Kalimasov is a former student of the Geographical Institute and a “Komsomoletz” (member of the Communist Union of Youth). Since 1924 he has been the object of continuous Bolshevik persecution, spending most of this time in prison and exile. He is a man of steadfast character and great

devotion; through all the years of his imprisonment he has consistently refused to betray his ideals and to accept the offer of the G. P. U. to join the Communist Party and thus secure liberty and a career. He is paying dearly for it; the long years of persecution having entirely shattered his health.

YEFIM GERASSIMOV, having completed his original sentence in the Upper Uralsk polit-isolator, was ordered into exile in Narim for three years.

MIKHAIL BEDYUKOV, has been exiled for three years to Parabe, in Narim, to which place are also sent for a similar term YEFIM DOLINSKY and RAYA SHULMAN.

DINA TSOIRIF, who was about to finish her term of exile in Saratov, was ordered deprived of the right to work and excluded from the union. This action of the G. P. U. dooms our comrade to unemployment for an indefinite time, which is equivalent to slow starvation.

NIKOLAI BELAYEV and two other comrades, exiles in Minusinsk, were arrested without any charge during the official celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution and detained for some time in prison. When they were finally released, the only explanation given them was that their imprisonment was due to a "misunderstanding."

IVAN KABAS-TARASIUK, who had been exiled to Petropavlovsk, has been transferred to Kokchetav, 280 miles further away.

According to recent information received by us, comrade AARON BARON, exiled to Tashkent, Turkestan, has again been arrested.

All the politicals have been transferred from the Yaroslavl polit-isolator to various other places of imprisonment and exile. In the Solovki there are still several score of our comrades, among them TUMANOV and TIMOSHA PLOTNIKOV. The latter is already completing his fourth year and it is not known how much longer he will be kept. He was originally condemned to the Solovki in connection with a case with which he had actually nothing to do. But no proofs availed and the G. P. U. had its way. The lot of our politicals in Solovki is extremely hard: the regime is severe, maltreatment by the officials frequent. The life of the prisoners is a constant struggle against injustice, discrimination and brutality. Only recently some of them went through protracted hunger strikes in protest against their treatment. Our comrade ANNA ROSOVA kept

up her hunger strike for 43 days and finally succeeded in compelling the administration to give in to her demands.

Comrade TROYANOV, author and journalist, whose satires were unusually clever and bitter, committed suicide in the prison of the G. P. U. The cause of his arrest and imprisonment is not clearly established, but it is generally believed that his writings proved uncomfortable for the authorities. Troyanov was an Anarchist of long standing: his revolutionary career began while he was still a student in the university during which time he took part in the revolutionary movement of 1905.

In Moscow was recently arrested the well-known Anarchist PIRO charged with alleged connection with the opposition, though as a matter of fact Piro has for many years not participated in any active work. The collection of books, particularly of works relating to the libertarian cause, was the great passion of Piro's life, and he possessed a very considerable library of rare volumes. It has now been confiscated by the government.

The very able young revolutionary writer MIROV, author of the splendid work "The Death of Isador Lutov," was recently arrested in Moscow and exiled to Ust-Sissolsk. Our comrade SABLIN was also exiled at the same time.

Sympathizers of Trotzky are being rounded up throughout Russia, so that the prisons are filled to overflowing. Perhaps the greatest number were arrested in Samara, among them also scores of Anarchists and Left Social-Revolutionists.

In Leningrad and Moscow, as well as in the provincial prisons, the G. P. U. is applying force to compel the politicals to make confessions and statements. The "hearings" always take place at night, the interrogating magistrates being frequently relieved, while the prisoner is compelled to pass nights in succession without sleep. The victims are often placed in the dungeon, where they have to lie on the cold, damp floor without any mattress or clothing. The torture is aggravated by the practice of throwing cold water upon the man. Many of the politicals are unable to stand this kind of treatment and as a result suicides have been multiplying of late.

(Ibid).

POLYA KURGANSKAYA

We have just learned that on August 26 there died in Krasnaya Polyana our dear comrade Polya Kurganskaya, leaving two small children behind.

The deceased was a very active and staunch Anarchist who throughout her life had given her best energies to the services of our cause. In proletarian circles she was widely known and beloved for her extreme devotion and tireless efforts.

She did splendid work in the labor movement during the Revolution. In 1920 she was arrested by the Bolsheviks, as were also a large number of other comrades at the time. For the past nine years, her life was a continuous Golgotha; she was driven from prison to exile and back to prison again. She passed through the Solovki, served in the Upper Uralsk polit-isolator, was imprisoned in the most desolate parts of Siberia, and finally exiled in the Tula Province, where she died of heart failure.

The most remarkable trait of Polya Kurganskaya was her entire selfishlessness and unchanging loyalty to her cause and her comrades. Though for years dragging on a miserable existence amid the worst surroundings, compelled to witness the suffering of her two small children, never sufficiently clad or fed, she yet retained her idealism and revolutionary integrity. All the wiles and threats of her Bolshevik jailers could not break down her wonderful spirit. She continually busied herself to make the lot of her fellow-sufferers more bearable, even at the cost of her personal safety. Her courage and humanity were the inspiration of all who came in contact with her. Of her it may be truly said that she was a veritable incarnation of the spirit of the early Russian revolutionists who had consecrated their all in the service of human liberation.

S. F.

We publish below the last letter of our dead comrade, and we take this occasion to call the attention of our readers to the two small children left by Polya Kurganskaya in her Tula exile. Immediately upon learning of our comrade's death, the Relief Fund forwarded aid to her children, but more assistance is urgently needed. We hope that our friends will not delay in responding.

(*"Bulletin of the Relief Fund,"* November-December 1929).

THE LAST LETTER OF POLYA KURGANSKAYA

(Dated August 18, 1929)

Dear S.

It is already six weeks since I've heard from you and I am growing anxious about your silence. I hope nothing untoward has happened.

Are you all well? Write soon, I beg you. I have received the 20 roubles you sent, but I must tell you that it is very hard for me to accept this aid, knowing how many others need it. By autumn I hope to be able to earn something with my sewing, if they will only let me work.

The children are feeling better, though my youngest, Natasha, is still coughing badly. My own health is not the best. I had to pawn my coat and shoes, but luckily the weather is warm now, so I can get along without those things. It is a hard life, but the worst of it is to see the little kiddies suffer. The rent eats everything up: 14 roubles a month for a dingy little room, but even at that it is considered cheap according to local conditions.

I had a letter from K - - - . He does not feel very well and has no work. If at all possible, send him some help: there are several others with him in the place.

My faith is strong that sooner or later these persecutions will come to an end and then we shall take our place in the family of our European comrades. With our activity we shall then repay for the fraternal assistance which we have been receiving all these years of the "Socialist" heaven. By this faith and hope I live.

I embrace you all, my dear ones.

Your POLYA

(*Ibid*).

IN PRISON AND EXILE

ANTON SHLYAKHOVOY, who has recently completed his term of imprisonment in the Upper Uralsk polit-isolator, is now exiled for three years to Siberia, the exact place not yet being known to us.

Our old comrade BASYA ZHEZLOVA, in exile in Tula, has fallen seriously ill and has been confined to her bed during the past several weeks.

EKATERINA LYAKH, having undergone a month's treatment in Moscow for an ear complaint, has been ordered back to her exile in Ust-Sissolsk. The medical treatment, so long delayed, has had no effect, and comrade LYAKH is now entirely deaf. Two years ago when her ear trouble had first started, she repeatedly applied to the Bolshevik government for permission to go to Germany for a cure, but all her pleas were ignored.

Two young Anarchists, VICTOR SERGEYEV and VLADIMIR YEGOROV, were arrested after finishing their exile in the city of

Tiumen, without known cause. So far we have not been able to gain information about their fate.

IVAN KABAS-TARASIUK, a well-known comrade, has been exiled to Tashkent after having completed his term in Kokichetov. The exiles Kruglov, Krasavin and Maximov have been transferred to the village of Surgut, Ural District. Cause unknown.

Comrade SECHKIN and his woman companion have been ordered into exile in Minusinsk.

ANYA ROSOVA, an Anarchist, was together with her small child sent as exiles to Nizhnjaja-Zaimka, Kansky District. At the same place is also exiled the Anarchist RAYA SHULMAN.

The Anarchists recently arrested in Moscow have all been condemned to three years by the G. P. U., with the exception of ANDREY ANDREYEV, who was liberated after a hunger strike of 15 days.

Among the prisoners are:

FRANCESCO GHEZZI, well-known Italian Anarchist who had been condemned to 20 years servitude in Italy. He sought political asylum in Russia, where he lived and worked as an ordinary proletarian. He made no secret of his Anarchist views, as a result of which he fell into the displeasure of the Che-Ka. He has been condemned to three years prison.

KAYDANOV (Ilovaysky), an old-time Anarchist who for some years prior to 1917 lived abroad, but returned to Russia in that year to participate in the Revolution. Exiled in Orenburg.

ROGDAYEV, an Anarchist of long standing, a very active and energetic worker. Exiled to Suzdal or Orenburg.

DORUSHAKIN, exiled to Siberia; MIKHAILOV, to Ufa. OTVERZHENNY and MUDROV, to Kasakhstan. TIKHON GAVRILIN, to the Severo-Dvinsk District.

KHUDOLEY and KHARKHARDIN, two well-known Anarchist writers, exiled to Suzdal.

V. BARMASH, who had been sentenced to "Katorga" under the Tzar, exiled to unknown region.

Professor ALEXEY BOROVOY, Anarchist lecturer and author, exiled to Viatka.

(Ibid).

THE CASE OF FRANCESCO GHEZZI

On June 24, 1929, the Secretariat of the International Working Men's Association sent a registered letter to the Soviet of Peoples Commissars, asking the reason for the arrest of the Italian Anarchist Francesco Ghezzi and urging his release. Up to now no answer has been received. We hereby call public attention to his case and at the same time repeat our demand for his liberation.

Francesco Ghezzi was prosecuted by the Italian courts on the charge of alleged participation in the Mailand explosions, in 1920. He was sentenced—in his absence—to 20 years servitude. In 1921 Ghezzi was arrested in Germany, and Italy demanded his extradition. The German Ministry of Justice refused to extradite him, on the ground that the prisoner was a political refugee and the charges against him of a political nature. Ghezzi was freed by the Berlin authorities, but was ordered to leave the country within three days.

As the Soviet Government had repeatedly declared that it would give refuge to all proletarians persecuted in capitalist countries, Ghezzi decided to go to Russia. There, he felt, he would be safe from persecution. The Russian embassy in Berlin issued to him official documents of a Russian citizen.

In Russia Ghezzi lived and worked as one of the proletariat. But he remained true to his Anarchist convictions and that proved his undoing, because in Soviet Russia there is no liberty of thought and free expression of opinion is not tolerated. Like numerous other Anarchists and revolutionists before him, Ghezzi was arrested by the G. P. U. and condemned administratively (without hearing or trial) to three years prison in Suzdal.

The imprisonment of Francesco Ghezzi is more than an ordinary outrage against the freedom of speech and thought; it is a direct demonstration that the Russian Government has betrayed its solemn promise to give asylum to the proletarian victims of political persecution in bourgeois countries.

We hereby again voice our demand that the Bolshevik authorities make known the reasons for the arrest of Ghezzi, and that he be liberated at once.

At the same time we call attention to the fact that the belief of revolutionary workers who are hounded in capitalist countries that they will find refuge in Russia, has been fundamentally shaken by the fate of Ghezzi.

On this occasion we also repeat our oft-made demand that the

Soviet Government cease its persecution of the revolutionary elements and free the thousands of politicals imprisoned and exiled in Russia.

The International Workingmen's Association

This letter of the I. W. M. A. was forwarded to Russia signed by internationally known names, among them ERNST TOLLER, HEINRICH MANN, KATE KOLLWITZ, Professor OPPENHEIM, OSCAR MARIA GRAF, G. FYSOLD, ALEXANDER GRANACH, and others.

(*Ibid*).

ALEXEY BOROVOY

The last of the Mohicans! The systematic uprooting of independent thought has finally reached Borovoy. To think otherwise than the Bolshevik state ordains has become an ever greater crime during the twelve years of Communist rule. The struggle against political offenders, which began immediately after the Bolsheviks assumed the reins of government, continues to be waged most ruthlessly. Some have been shot; all the others are paying with imprisonment and exile. Some time ago the news came that the handful of Anarchists still at large in Moscow had been arrested and exiled to various parts of the Bolshevist empire. Borovoy alone remained. Now he, too, suffers a similar fate, having been doomed to exile for three years.

Professor Alexey Alexeyevich Borovoy belongs to the older generation that was active in our movement long before the World War. With marked individualist tendencies in his writings of the pre-war period, Borovoy joined the Anarchist Communist movement soon after the October Revolution. Intellectual to the tips of his fingers, he could not at once make up his mind as to direct participation in the labor movement which, in 1917, was opening great new propangandistic vistas to the Anarchists. Together with several other intellectuals he organized the "Union of the Idealist Propaganda of Anarchism." Of that group only two members refused to bow before the omnipotence of Bolshevism. One of them was Borovoy.

As soon as the Anarcho-Syndicalist movement became organized in Moscow, Borovoy joined it and remained true to it to the last. Ever since then he participated in all the manifestations of Anarchist thought—few and far between as they necessarily were—events regularly followed by merciless persecution of those who dared take part in them. Thus Borovoy's voice was heard at the annual

gatherings in memory of Peter Kropotkin, at the Bakunin commemoration meeting, and lately in connection with the exposure of the so-called "mystical Anarchists" in the Anarchist press abroad.

A lecturer at the Moscow University before the war, he lost his Chair upon the accusation of the Bolsheviki who would not allow a non-Marxist to lecture on economics and philosophy. Unfit for physical labor, he was compelled to join the terrifying army of Soviet bureaucarcy, to save himself from starvation. But he never hid his opinions and he always gave vent to them whenever and wherever he could. He is an excellent speaker and his melodious voice carried the argument to the very soul of his listeners.

Bolshevism has certainly managed to imprison and exile all the active Anarchists. But it must fail where all the other states and Che-Kas have failed; it cannot destroy Anarchist thought and work.

A. S.

(Ibid).

Professor Alexey Borovoy died in 1936 in Wiatka exile.

1931

PERSECUTION CONTINUES

The following comrades have recently been transferred to other places after having served out their original exile terms. From the Ural District they have been sent to new exile, some of them receiving the so-called "minus six" sentence, which means that they are forbidden to live in six of the larger industrial centers.

KOSOV and MAXIMOV were sent to Sverdlovsk. KRASAVIN, NEY, ARENDARENKO and PRIANISHNIKOV to Beresov. MICHALKOV to the town of Stcheglovsk. Our old comrade IVAN KRUGLOV, who has spent many years in prison and exile, has been ordered to an unknown destination.

Comrade P. GERASIMCHUK, who in past years was active in the publishing house of the "Golos Trouda," has completed his term in the political prison at Suzdal and has now been ordered for three years exile to Beresov.

Comrade RAZIN, FEDOROV and MAZOURIN have completed three years in Narym, Siberia, and have left for Tomsk under the order of "Minus six."

Comrade VOULISS, a very sick man, who was exiled in Narym, has now been transferred on account of his bad physical condition to Minusinsk, in Siberia.

VASSILY MAKAROV was deported to Obdorsk, for three years.

Another comrade V. MALOV, has also been sent away for three years to the Ural, in the village of Chadrinsk.

Comrade SYRIL SADOV was deported to Archangel, after having served his term in Narym.

The well-known comrade VLADIMIR BARMASH, an Anarchist of long standing, who has suffered prison under the Tzarist regime, has fallen very ill in the Butirky Prison, Moscow. Instead of being released for adequate medical treatment, he was ordered to be transferred to the political prison at Verkhne-Uralsk.

(*"Bulletin of the Relief Fund," April 1931, Berlin.*)

1932

THE CHRONICLE OF THE PERSECUTIONS

A. KORDAO and A. BOROVINKOV finished their imprisonment in the Solovietzki Islands and have thereupon been sentenced to exile for three years in Archangel. IVAN NOVIKOV was sent to Kudimkor for a similar period.

Our old comrades I. KABAS-TARASIUK, MARIA VEGER and G. VASILIEV are kept in exile in Tashkent, Turkestan. Recently they were arrested; however as there was absolutely no reason for this G. P. U. action, they were "released," yet not before the authorities added another year to their term of exile.

P. FISSUN, and A. PROTZENKO as well as A. KROTUS were kept in prison in Ust-Sisolsk a whole year for "preliminary investigation" and now they have been finally released without explanation or apology.

Comrade A. WEINSTEIN and ISAAK TARASIUK having finished their term in Veliky-Ustiug, were sent into exile in Orel for three years.

To the same place and for a similar length of time were condemned administratively LEV RABINOVICH, who had finished his exile term in Irbit, Ural, and Raya Shulman, who had spent six years of exile in Parabel, Siberia.

A second term of exile has been ordered for the following comrades: B. TUBISMAN—in Voronezh; B. LIPOVIETZKY—in Dnepropetrovsk; NIKOLAI BELYAEV and BASYA ZHESLOVA—in Simpheropol; E. GERASSIMOV—in Ulianovsk; F. GOLUBOV—in Swerdlovsk; A. ZOLOTAREV—in Poltava; A. KOLIMASOV—in Vladimir; and Alexei MALINOVSKY—in Vologda.

Besides the above, a large number of comrades who have finished their sentences now await "decision" in their cases. This "decision" simply means exile for the usual three years to some far part of Russia or Siberia. Very frequently the new orders arrive many months late, but this time of waiting, mostly in prison, through the fault of the administration, is *not* deducted from the new exile sentence.

(*Bulletin of the Relief Fund . . .* April 1932).

RAYA SHULMAN

One of the most tragic cases is that of RAYA SHULMAN. In February, 1925, she was arrested as a participant in the memorial meeting held in Leningrad on the anniversary of the death of Peter Kropotkin. Administratively, without hearing or trial, she was sent away to Upper-Uralsk and there imprisoned in the polit-isolator.

The following year, in 1926, there took place fearful beatings and physical tortures of the Upper-Uralsk political prisoners. Raya Shulman was one of the victims, and before long she began to show symptoms of mental aberration.

The efforts of her well-connected relatives succeeded in having Raya transferred for treatment in a Moscow hospital the prisoner remaining under guard of the G. P. U. But before Raya completely recovered, she was again returned to prison.

In May, 1929, her term being completed, Raya Shulman, instead of being liberated, was doomed to exile in the Kansk District, Siberia, and thence she was transferred, in March 1930 to Narim.

The method of frequent changes of prisons and places of exile, involving different environment and climatic conditions, served to aggravate the condition of Raya Shulman. Moreover, she took seriously ill and was almost paralyzed by acute rheumatism.

Her only hope was that, at the expiration of her exile term, she might be placed by her relatives in the care of proper physicians. She patiently waited for that day, but when her official "release" time came, she was again condemned to exile in Orel, where medical attention and treatment are entirely excluded.

This new order of the G. P. U. against Raya Shulman is virtually equivalent to a sentence of death. Raya is on the point of entire physical and mental collapse. The only chance of saving her life is in enabling her to come to Moscow for serious medical treatment. But the G. P. U. has refused the demand.

(Ibid).

THE GOLGOTHA

After 15 years of "pacification" the Bolsheviks continue the same system of persecution of political opinion. As a matter of fact that system has become more than ever irresponsible from long practice and habit. Many of our comrades have now been in prison and exile for more than 10 years. Some others have been imprisoned 4, 6 and even 8 times, and always for the same offense. But let no innocent

believe that the "offense" possibly consists in having taken part in uprisings, conspiracies or the like activities. By no means. Anyone in the least suspected of even such thoughts is executed without further investigation. Our comrades who are doomed to prison or exile suffer solely for holding opinions not approved of by the present masters of Russia. They are being sent from prison to exile and back again from exile to prison, always without trial or hearing, always by administrative order, which in "Socialist" Russia simply means on the report, usually secret, of some police spy or Chekist.

The conditions for politicals in prison or exile are almost beyond description. Our comrades in particular are subjected to every form of persecution and nothing is left undone by the powers that be that could add to their daily torture. Men from the warm southern climate are ordered to some prison of the frozen North, without either time or opportunity to procure warmer clothing or other absolute necessities in the cold climate. Illness is almost entirely ignored and the order of a Chekist overrides the physician, if there happens to be one in the given prison or place of exile. As to food, the politicals in every prison, camp and exile are literally doomed to slow death by starvation, and were it not for the little aid that our comrades get from our sympathizers and friends, most of them would have perished of hunger long ago.

Some day the future historian will compile the history of all the suffering and martyrdom of the politicals under the regime of Bolshevism, and the world will stand aghast at the infamy and barbarism of the Communist masters. In that history will be incorporated the messages that reach us from the cells of the Solovietzki Islands, from the basements of the "political-isolators," from the dungeons of the inner prisons of the G. P. U., from the frozen exiles in Siberia and of the Arctic. Only then will humanity realize the heroism of the men and women who have been willing to suffer a thousand deaths for their faith in a better day and a happier mankind.

Among the Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists again made victims of Bolshevik persecution are the following:

ALEXANDROV, MAKHONIN and SILVESTROV have been arrested after having served long terms in the Solovki. All three have been sent to a "polit-isolator," for reasons unknown. Which means that, after having been released from the Bolshevik Devil's Island, they refused to betray their faith in their ideals.

Comrades KOLOGRIV and LINCHEVSKY have been doomed to a new term of exile. Kologriv had returned from America to Russia in 1921 to devote his services to the welfare of the Russian masses. He secured work on the freight station of the Kiev railroad line, and his ability and efforts soon won for him the respect and friendship of his co-workers. But Kologriv was an Anarchist, and it did not fit in with the purposes of the G. P. U. that a non-Bolshevik, an Anarchist at that, should enjoy the good-will of the workers and have influence among them. Before long he was accused of appropriating several pounds of sugar! The workers at the place, who knew that Chekist hatred was the cause of the accusation, took our comrade's part. An investigation fully proved Kologriv's innocence. But the G. P. U. had marked him for their victim.

Before a few weeks passed Kologriv and his comrade David Linchevsky were called for military service. The authorities knew very well that because of their convictions the two Anarchists would refuse to join the army, and that was just the opportunity they needed. Our comrades had indeed the courage to declare that they will not kill other workers, either in their country or those of any other country, and forthwith the G. P. U. ordered them into exile in Archangel.

Kologriv's wife and the wife and three small children of Linchevsky were left in Kiev without any means of subsistence. Linchevsky had been working in a bakery, and that bakery offered to give work to his wife, but the local Communist organization forbade her employment, and now the wives of our comrades and their children are left to starve.

The fate of two other comrades, KUMANOV and KORDAO, is even more tragic. Kumanov has suffered Bolshevik persecution almost uninterruptedly during the last 10 years. He has spent five years in the Soloviki. Kordao has been tortured 10 years in the same place and is now a complete invalid. Now both Kumanov and Kordao have been confined in some distant prison again, and the place of their imprisonment is kept secret.

One might ask, for what fearful crime are these comrades treated in this manner? What are they charged with? The crime charged against them is exchanging a few letters with friends in Europe!

N. BELYAEV and O. RIKOVSKY, were recently arrested and imprisoned in Simferopol. They had only a short time before

completed a long prison sentence and were living in Simferopol as exiles. No reason has been given for their arrest.

Among the comrades doomed to new exile within the last months are the following: YEGOROV, YURCHENKO, ARKHANGELSKY and RAYEVSKY have been sent to Yenisseisk; PLOTNIKOV to Central Asia; SHULMAN to Belgorod; BLUMIN and MAKARIANTZ to Tobolsk; RUVIMSKY, NEMERITZKAYA and ANATOLY KONSE to Kursk.

Comrade MIKHAILOV has been transferred to Orel. NICHOLAS ROGDAYEV, one of the oldest, ablest and most loyal comrades, has been exiled to Tashkent, in Turkestan, after having completed a three-year term in the Suzdal polit-isolator.

VLADIMIR BARMASH has just ended a three-year sentence in the Upper-Uralsk polit-isolator, and now he has been exiled for three years to Yenisseisk, in Siberia

A similar fate is shared by KHARKHARDIN, who after three years in the Suzdal prison, has been sent for three years to Alma-Ata, in Turkestan.

ALEXEY BOROVOY, one of Russia's best informed and ablest Anarchists and formerly professor in the University of Moscow, has completed his three-year term in Viatka exile. Instead of being liberated he has been, according to G. P. U. custom with Anarchists, sent to new exile for another three years.

At this point it is well to remind our readers that the G. P. U. always demands of the politicals that they renounce their non-Bolshevik ideas and opinions, after their term of prison has been completed. Those who have the manhood and revolutionary integrity to refuse to comply with the infamous G. P. U. demand are sentenced to new exile, then again to new imprisonment, and again to exile, without end. Thus it happens that most of our comrades, once imprisoned, never again see the light of liberty. The greater number of Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists (as well as Left and Right Social-Revolutionoists, Mensheviks, Zionists and other politicals) who were originally arrested in the first years of the Lenin rule, are still in prison or exile, or have been killed by prison hardships.

Comrade KHUDOLEY finished three years in the Suzdal political prison and has been exiled for a similar term to the wilds of Altay.

ANDREI ANDREYEV, an old and tried comrade, has served three

years in exile in Novosibirsk and has received another sentence of the same duration in the same place.

KAYDNOV-ILOVAYSKY has finished a three-year sentence in Orenburg exile. In spite of very serious illness he has been doomed to another three years in Orel

MARIA PETROSOVA was not released after she completed her term in Yeniseisk, Siberia. Instead she was given another three years in the same place.

Professor SOLONOVICH, active member of the Kropotkin Museum, is still being kept in prison, without any known charge. It is already two years since he has been incarcerated, and he still has three more years of his original sentence of five years, imposed by the G. P. U.

Most of our comrades in prison and exile have fallen ill as a result of inhuman treatment, insufficient and bad food, and unhygienic conditions. A number of them died recently, among them being:

NAUMOV—in Tomsk.

MAKAROV—in Obdorsk.

DORA STEPNEYA—in Moscow.

KLAVDIA LOGINOVA—in Irbit.

BORIS GUREVICH—in the Kharkov prison. (The circumstances of his sudden death seem very suspicious, as he had not been reported ill).

The son of CLARA FEDERMER—in Stalingrad.

ELENA KANASHEVICH—in Kudimkor.

("The International Workingmen's Association (Syndicalist International) Russian Fund," January 1933; Haarlem, Holland).

ALEXANDER NAUMOV

He was 26 years old when he died. But he seems to have lived longer than 26 years. . . . And he went through a whole lot more than most people of his age. Yet he was not enabled to live in the very real sense. . . . To work, struggle, create, to live the well-rounded existence of a young fighter, idealist and revolutionist—alas—that was denied him.

For he was snatched away while only a stripling, who was only groping his way; for it was in prison only, where he had met

people whose way of thinking was so near to him, that he came to see his way clear. . . . And how intensely he regretted that he had not known all that! How strongly he wished that he had the opportunity to live the life of a man who has found himself after having wandered long in the dark. That realization came to him now that he came to feel with every fiber of his emaciated body that he would not last long, that he was sinking from day to day, that neither his indomitable will, nor his passionate desire to live, neither his youth nor his ardent blood—nothing would halt the approaching end. . . .

Naumov died. . . . A young, steadfast, devoted comrade died, one whose life was devoted to our ideas with his soul and body—he died from tuberculosis which he had contracted during his exile to the Solovky Islands. And the only thing I have to remember him by is a postal card sent from the clinic, with the address written by him, while the notification itself was already pinned by someone else: . . . “Died April 18 in Tomsk, in the clinic.”

That is what one of the exiled comrades writes us about Naumov.

We here, abroad, received the same kind of postal card: the address shows his handwriting and on the reverse side—a notification of his death. . . . And now I have before me his letters written to his friends abroad during the last two years of his life.

There are only a few of them—but what letters! . . . Every line breathes such youthful ardor, such simple and winning sincerity! In reading those letters one forgets that the author is a doomed man, that the dried-up flower to be put on the grave of the Communards—was sent by one who himself, a month later, was to sink into the grave. . . .

.“Deeply agitated”—he writes in that letter—“I viewed the snapshot of the wall of Communards which you sent me recently. Space and. . . prevent me from carrying out my ardent wish: to bow reverently before the ashes of those who sacrificed their lives for Freedom. Nothing, however, will prevent my heart from beating in unison with the hearts of the children and grandchildren of the Communards, nothing will prevent me from loving with all my heart the great Truth of the Communards and hate their executioners, *and no one will be able to shake my faith in the near triumph of this truth.* . . .

.I am inserting here two modest little flowers which grew up here upon the Russian land, upon the land swept with the blood of

the Russian workers and peasants. . . . Place those flowers upon the the blood-soaked grave of the Communards. . . . The day is drawing near when the blood of the Russian workers and of the French Communards will blossom forth into the gorgeous flower of freedom and Commune. . . .”

He writes simply, unaffectedly and with reserve. Of himself, of his brief life he writes reluctantly: he had to be asked several times before he had sent in a brief story of his life, told in a matter of fact manner, giving only a dry record of events.

He is the son of a peasant from the province of Tula. His father was an inveterate drunkard. “In my young days,” he writes, “my parents were driven by their poverty to move to Moscow.” There his mother worked as a cook and her only son “until eight years of age breathed the heavy air of the kitchen.” Then the family went back to the village and the young Naumov entered the local school. His passion for reading earned him the nickname “the learned one.” For five years after his graduation from the local village school the young lad was deprived of the chance to study. In 1920 he entered the “agricultural technicum.” In 1921 he joined the Communist cell of the school: “This joining was an impulsive and not a conscious act on my part.” In 1922 “he left the technicum, aiming to enter the Rabfac (college prep schools for workers) and through the latter the university (social science faculty). “The Komsomol awakened within me a deep interest toward social sciences, which brought about a more conscious reaction toward life and the gradual breaking away from the Komsomol and its ideas.”

“I did not have much luck with the Rabfac—I was too late for it. I drifted into the second training school for infantry officers. . . . It was with difficulty that I bore those two months of barrack life. . . . In 1923 I began clerking in one of the Moscow offices. I drifted further and further away from the Komsomol. Although ignorant of Anarchism and lacking any contacts with Anarchists, I was constantly reprimanded for my ‘Anarchist deviations.’ Whence those deviations came to me—I do not know.

“In March 1924 I withdrew my membership card from the Komsomol, having submitted a written declaration to that effect. In May of the same year I was arrested and charged with ‘keeping and spreading of anti-Soviet literature which they found on me, and also my writings in which I attempted to get my bearings in the chaos of ideas and impressions overwhelming me at that time.

But I was not a Menshevik, nor did I even sympathize with the Mensheviks. Nor was I an Anarchist. I was just a seeker, groping my way through.

"I was exiled for three years to Ural region. In the city of Tobolsk I had my first chance to meet Anarchists and obtain Anarchist literature from them. I plunged into the study of the latter and in 1925 I came to feel myself organically linked up with the doctrine of Anarchism-Communism. In the same year as a result of a tiff which I had with the G. P. U. authorities I was transferred to Obdorsk. There another conflict took place which landed me in prison for ten months. In the spring of 1926 I was transferred to the Tobolsk prison. Altogether this year of prison told heavily upon my mental and physical state.

"In January 1927 I was arrested in Tobolsk, and in July of the same year I was banned for three years to the Solovky islands.

"After having served my term in Solovky I was exiled to Siberia for additional three years. I left Solovky on February 1930, already stricken with pulmonary tuberculosis, throat ailment and many other ailments—all of which became aggravated as a result of a typhus contracted in 1930.

"On May 20, 1930, I landed upon the shores of Karga; I was ragged, half alive and only had 3 roubles and 40 kopeks in my pocket (\$1.20). And then the trials and tribulations of the Siberian exile began. The room—a veritable bed-bug breeder. . . . One could fall asleep only at five o'clock in the morning. It was even worse with food. During the two and a half months that I spent in Kargarsk I ate potatoes only three or four times, and as to butter, milk, meat, eggs—I forgot how they looked. . . ."

He did little complaining, but he could not altogether hide the real situation. "The material and spiritual conditions of life," he wrote during that period, "are conducive towards the progressive development of tuberculosis. I am carried away very often in my thoughts to your active life and I feel deeply pained that I cannot take part in the struggle which needs people so badly. . . . Every line that I receive from you, comrades, is like a breath of fresh air for one that is being stifled. . . ."

Toward the end of May, Naumov was taken away to the hospital in Tomsk. The disease was rapidly destroying his organism. "On the whole," he confessed at that time, "I am a first-rate invalid. . . . But this is only bodily so—I still feel buoyant in spirit. . . ." He

even wanted to sign out of the hospital, being eager to obtain work, But in vain! . . . The disease has done its work. On April 18 Naumov breathed his last. . . .

That is the entire "life story!" And what is so unique about it?—the reader may ask not without justification perhaps. Who really wants that story about an anonymous youth whose fate seems to differ so little from the fate of many others like him?

And who will believe that story? Who, among the "revolutionists" abroad, among those who are vociferous about equality and freedom, who will believe that "in the first and only socialist country of the world" young and self-denying revolutionists, workers and peasants are doomed only because they refuse to let themselves be indoctrinated and because they make an attempt to think their own thoughts?

Who will believe that among the hundreds and thousands of such "heterodox" people, who now rot away in the prisons and exile places of Soviet Russia, there is not one who could be indicted—even by the Soviet court, which lacks any guarantees of fair trial—on charges of a criminal nature?

Who will believe that people who are sentenced for a number of years to hard prison labor or exile by a mere administrative "prikaze" (order) of the G. P. U. can easily save themselves all those horrible tortures just by signing a small piece of paper stating that they have retracted their convictions?

Who will believe that it is because of this firmness of conviction, the refusal to traffic with their conscience that the best fighters for freedom are doomed in "The land of Socialism?"

Who among the tourists and "workers' delegations" making their yearly pilgrimage to the Holy Mecca will believe it?

Whoever among them took the trouble of looking into the political prisons and of talking to the political prisoners, who are the only group of Soviet citizens who speak their minds freely, fearless of consequences?

Who among those "delegates," instead of regarding the visit to Russia as a "joy ride" along the officially mapped out itinerary, set himself the aim to see things for himself, to get away to the far off, forsaken corners of Ural, Siberia, Turkestan, all those places of exile and to find out even sketchily, but from first hand, how those people live and why they were punished by the "workers' and peasants' government?"

And if they wish to do so but are prevented by the all-seeing

eye of the G. P. U., what keeps them from raising their voice of protest upon their return from Soviet Russia? What accounts for the almost universal "conspiracy of silence" on this matter?

(*"The Bulletin of the Russian Relief Fund of the International Workingmen's Association, No. 26, November 1932*).

THE LETTERS FROM PRISONS AND EXILES

I take advantage of my "free" day to send you a few lines. But don't misunderstand my saying "free" day, for I really have no days off. I am serving as a sister in this hospital, and I am the only trained nurse here. There is no one to take my place even after twelve or fourteen hours of work. It is my duty to receive the sick brought in by the ambulances, to take care of the sickroom and also to visit patients outside the hospital. It often happens that I have to remain on duty 48 hours in succession. There is no overtime pay—that has been abolished. But of course, I don't work for pay, for that is insignificant. I love my profession and because of that I am able to do the best I can for the poor unfortunates that need my aid.

There are only five persons employed in the entire hospital: the doctor, his assistants and myself. We receive about 100 patients daily who are brought by our ambulances from the entire district, for various kind of treatment, of shorter or longer duration. In the hospital itself we have a permanent population of 40 patients who are very seriously ill. 75 of them are typhoid patients.

The tragedy of the situation is that the medical aid we can give is insignificant compared to the needs of the population. Moreover what good are doctors and nurses when the material conditions of the workers and peasants are such that death is a relief for them? The peasant mothers actually wish for the death of their babies and little children—they simply cannot afford to have them. Frequently mothers beg the nurse to "relieve" them of the new-born baby, and there have been cases where mothers have refused to feed their babies, preferring them to die.

The existing economic and social conditions are such as to drive

these peasants to desperation. Hunger and the fear of tomorrow tend to kill even mother's love. Add to it the ruthless attitude of the authorities and the cruel methods in daily practice, and you will have an approximate idea of what our life is like here. . . .

(*"Bulletin of the Relief Fund," April, 1932*)

**

.A little about our new life here. Our every movement, our every thought almost, is being watched, and there is no telling when or by whom you may be denounced. One has the need of exchanging his feelings and views with his fellow-men, but we live under such abnormal conditions that there is no chance for any of our people to get together, to spend an hour socially, to exchange opinions or to consult on matters of vital importance in our lives. And when you walk into the street, the sights are most unbearable. The people are hungry, miserable, oppressed. Every one seems to be afraid of his very shadow. The newspapers with their endless misrepresentation of the actual situation and obvious lies turn your stomach. It is impossible to read them when you know the truth. On the market the prices for necessaries are exorbitant. A pound of butter, for instance, costs 15 roubles. Meat comes to about the same price. Where should one get such money? In the so-called cooperatives you can get 600 grams of bread a day and two pounds of sugar per month, and that is all. These are NOT workers' cooperatives, they are branches of the government distribution centers. There is neither butter nor fats, nor tobacco nor cigarettes. In short, the most necessary things for physical existence are lacking, and you are expected to live on "enthusiasm" for the "great plans." That "enthusiasm" is based purely on oppression. You can imagine what our lives—both our physical and spiritual existence—is like. I can tell you from experience that state capitalism is the very worst enemy of the people! It kills both body and soul.

M.

(*Ibid*).

I cannot write you much now because our friend Naumov is critically ill. He suffers from consumption, but the conditions are such that very little can be done for him. He needs quiet and nourishing food, and that is just the things we cannot have here. A bit of milk and some horse-meat is all that we can procure, at best. . . . I myself have also lost a good deal of weight during the

last six months. The climate here in the North and the physical deprivation are beginning to tell on both of us. I am afraid that this new term of three years' exile will be the end of us.

For two months I have been without employment. The authorities have prevented my taking a position in my special line, and other work cannot be secured. There are but few Government institutions here, but now and then they need a mechanic, a position for which I am well trained. But such is life here. . . .

P.S.

(Ibid).

**

I know it is awful my comrades, to write you such sad letters, but what can we do? We cannot lie to you. We write seldom, and then we cannot help telling you the truth about the conditions under which we live. . . . Our room is cold, unheated. It's winter time and you know what that means, in this climate. . . . Today I stood nearly two hours in line to get some bread, and I was lucky at that, because some days it takes much longer. . . . An epidemic of black pox and typhus has broken out in our district. We had to get preventative injections—my children and I—and now our arms are all swollen and it is hard to do any work. . . .

I cannot write more. The room is dark. Electric lights have been promised, but not before May. . . .

B.

**

It was a miracle that I actually received the book you sent. And how happy I was! When I opened it, it was in German, which unfortunately I can't read. But there is a comrade here who reads that language, so I gave him the book, asked him to read it and tell me the contents. Alas, before he could finish reading it he took sick—some horse meat that had been issued to him was evidently not of good quality. At any rate, he died before he could tell me anything about the book. . . . The poor fellow, it appears now, really died from undernourishment. His stomach had become too weak to stand a horse meat diet. And yet, we are glad even when we can get hold of a piece of any kind of meat, wherever it comes from. . . . We have all been saddened by the death of our friend. He was a fine fellow, of a generous and noble nature. He had been driven from prison to exile during many years. . . .

L. F.

(Ibid).

Dear Comrade,

.....We are not surprised that you cannot understand the relation of Marxism-Leninism to the science of photography — we confess, we also cannot see the least connection between those matters. But we have learned not to dig too deeply into the mysteries of official rules and orders and attitudes. . . . The “spirit” of Marxism-Leninism is now being introduced into mathematics, astronomy, architecture and other similar fields of historic materialism. How can we, dark people, pretend to understand these Marx-Lenin mysteries? Nor, we are sure, will you, friends, grasp these supernatural conceptions.

Let us therefore turn to more concrete matters. We live here a disordered, not to say disorderly, life. A great deal of time is spent in running about from place to place to secure something which is substantial for the stomach and which, at the same time, is within reach of our income. As a rule, there are no fundamental products: I mean such things as meat, fats, sugar, but of candy and face powder there is no lack. It is hard to get bread or flour, but you may procure cake. But the prices of all these things are sky high. We have been refused the opportunity to get our dinner at public eating house; that, together with poor health, has served to bankrupt our private exchequer.

Regarding foodstuffs, the situation here is as follows: besides the “commercial” stores there are also cooperatives; some of the latter are “open,” the others “closed” to the average citizen. It is impossible to give a general description of the cooperatives, because there are a great variety of them, all differing in their methods, supplies, etc., each social group, and even every institution within such a group, has its own cooperative with its own supplies. We are working in government institutions, yet in spite of that we belong to the group known as the “deprived ones.” A very large group, indeed, consisting of persons of the variegated professions and trades, of different political attitude and social standing. This group is deprived of many rights. Thus we are allowed to buy at “set prices” only flour, sugar and a few similar things in the most microscopic doses. To procure anything else, such as clothing, shoes and so on, one must have a cooperative card or membership, or be a member of a trade union. But that is forbidden to us. As a result of this, we are practically compelled to buy everything in the open market at the most incredibly exorbitant prices. Of course we possess no

such financial means. Moreover, in the "open" market the products are of very bad quality and mostly second hand stuff, first bought at the cooperatives and then resold at a high price upon the market.

Under these conditions the vaunted "high wages" are the veriest irony. For even the highest nominal wage cannot purchase on the open market even the fundamental necessities of existence. . . .

B.

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*

(*Ibid*)

.Excuse me for not writing you before, though I had your address. I was in no condition to write after I left the polit-isolator. The truth is, even now I feel the effects of that experience. . . . I have been intending to write to Maximoff a long time ago, whom I knew by accident so to speak. It was late in 1921 that I returned from Murmansk, while he and his comrades were being deported to Berlin. I am sure that he will not remember me. It is a long time ago, and we had met only casually. I was then only a little over 20 years old and I had just finished my studies in the Tolmatchev Academy of Leningrad. Political economy and philosophy were the main subjects there, and of course the greatest stress was laid on Marx's Capital. And naturally we also had to study his dialectics. Some of the students there were soon showing a heretical inclination, leaning more toward the direction of Proudhon, Bakunin and Kropotkin. The instructors strictly discouraged all such tendencies, and even Plekhanov, the old Socialist thinker, was proscribed. The authorities frowned upon everyone who showed some inclination to independent thought, and there were many cases of friction as a result. Still, it was the happiest time of my life. . . .

Before I went to the Academy I lived in Eastern Russia, and when I left the Academy I went to Central Ukraine. I stayed in Alexandrovsk, Militopolsk and other cities, where I had to carry on the struggle for existence. I worked in a brick-making factory, and then I studied Latin and entered a drug-store. But my health was bad, as I am naturally of weak constitution, and so I had to give up physical labor. Later, I returned to Leningrad and for no known reason I was soon ordered deported for three years. They sent me to Beresov, where I stayed from 1924 to 1927. At the expiration of my sentence I was given "minus six" and sent to the city of Perm, where I was again arrested in 1928. . . .

Thus began a long calvary from prison to prison. I was kept in

different political dungeons, and this year they sent me from the Verkhne-Uralsk prison into exile here. It is due to my consumptive condition that they exiled me to this region. . . . But it is no use speaking of my bad condition. Some of our comrades are even worse off. A. has had an operation, but it has only made his condition worse. We are very anxious about him. N. is also a very sick man, and he suffers even more than the others because he is a vegetarian. Life is very sad. . . .

The place I am in is rather small, but fortunately there is a library, most of the books are works of Marx and Lenin, but it is noticeable that few of the population ever demand this. The natives prefer the old novels, it seems. Some of them have told me that they cannot read the new literature, as it is hard for them to understand it. Among the exiles there are a number of Trotsky followers and they try to get works of Leon in the library. There are many different views among them on the tendencies of their leader, and in general, there are among the politicals all shades of opinion and party. But otherwise, life in this place is very grey and monotonous. All of us live in the hope of a coming future that will be different and better than the present. . . .

We do not permit ourselves to despair.

S.

(Ibid).

I want to thank you heartily for the money you sent. We don't know what we would do without your help. . . . In this far-away exile we are hardly able to keep body and soul together, and some of us are very ill; some are so weak from lack of nourishment that they can hardly walk at all. It is just as bad in regard to clothes, the climate is severe, but we have no proper underwear, no solid shoes, and I suffer fearfully from rheumatism. My companion and I hope somehow to survive until the end of our term. Maybe then we can return to Russia proper and maybe conditions will improve for us there. Of course we know how the people suffer there also for the necessities, but at least we will be nearer to those who are dear to us. Here, existence is becoming daily more unbearable. . . . G. is about to go now with my last pair of trousers to exchange them for potatoes. The peasants have very little left from their crop, because of the high percentage they have to turn over to the State. They refuse to sell for money and so we must give them our very

last possessions. There is little that we get to eat here. No milk whatever, almost never any meat, few vegetables. So that potatoes are the main food, and if we can't get even that. . . . Well, you will understand such a calamity. So we have eaten up all our wardrobe, literally speaking.

S.

(*Ibid*).

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. . . We try to follow from here what is happening in the world, especially in the world of the proletarian. Of course, it is not easy to keep informed in our exile. But some journals and old magazines reach us now and then, and you can imagine how we read them from cover to cover and try to think out what is going on in the world at large. . . . Unfortunately, it seems to us that the European workers are not accomplishing the things one might wish. Of course it is hard to judge from here, yet our impression from what we read is that there is disorganization and strife where there should be harmony and solidarity. . . .

But your letters bring us great cheer and hope also. We can see that news of the real events in labor ranks does not reach us. . . . We want to thank you for the ray of sunshine that your mail always brings us. . . . How we would like to be with you, to take part in the great struggle outside and share our views and opinions with you. . . . There is so much to talk over, so much to ask and learn. . . . It is therefore that we write you little of our personal life, it is too banal a subject to talk about when there are such great and grave problems facing the world. They demand solution, and we are always eager to have you write us on these matters. . . . From here it is hard to say much about it, as you understand. But rest assured that your letters are the main inspiration of our drab existence. . . .

T.

(*Ibid*).

1933

*KREMLIN, POLITBUREAU
COPY*

*To the Presidium
of the G. P. U.*

We protest.

Ten years have passed since the final smash-up of the legal Anarchist organizations has taken place in the U.S.S.R. A long time ago the Bolsheviki cast off the mask behind which they were hiding in the first years of the revolution.

When the Anarchists were in the van of the bloody struggle, when they were coolies of the revolution, when they were still needed, the Bolsheviki tolerated them with a "comradely" smile.

But no sooner were the military fronts liquidated, no sooner was the internal counter-revolution crushed, than the Bolshevik authorities found it no more necessary to work together with the Anarchists.

The Anarchist printing shops were confiscated, their press was strangled, their publications seized and hundreds of comrades were locked up in prisons without the benefit of trial, banished to places of exile and even executed. Old men, youths, women have been driven about from one place to another.

We shall not dwell here at any length upon such known facts as the pogrom carried out in the Butirky prison, the shootings in Solovki, the beatings administered to the prisoners of the Verkhne-Uralsk prison. Hunger strikes became common, every-day events, reminiscent of the most ferocious years of the Tzar's regime.

The sentences meted out by the G. P. U. are nothing but Jesuitic lies, since the terms of those sentences are invariably lengthened in quite an arbitrary manner; this is done under the guise of applying the so-called "minus-system", and at times it is just put into effect with no embellishments at all.

"Political isolation" means at least nine years of trials and tribulations with the G. P. U. In prison and exile—nine years of slow methodical beatings, with no visible traces left on the body.

Apart from the gradual murders by starvation, the exiled Anarchists are also subjected to the humiliation of treatment as common criminals, prostitutes and wreckers.

Those that are released with the "minus" marked on their papers, must show those documents whenever they register or apply for work; they become an easy prey to any one with a bent for persecution, who can lynch them at will.

They are deprived of the right to work and are only suffered to earn a livelihood by some special grace of the authorities. Black listing is frequently applied, and we both can testify to it in our capacity of unemployed. Proscription lists exist not as a matter of chance, but as part of a system.

As a result of the long confinement in prison, an illness which could not be attended under the conditions of life in exile, of semi-starvation and moral tortures—there perished one of the most active figures of the three revolutions and the European revolutionary movement—the Anarchist Nicolai Rogdayev, who was picked up on *Sacco* and *Vanzetti* street.

His premature death was predetermined by the "monkey trial" of 1929, at which also our lynching took place.

Such a fate threatened all of us, and especially the old comrades among us.

We cannot wait in silence until the noose draws tightly around our necks.

We openly declare our defiance of the "minuses" tacked on after we had unwarrantedly served our time in exile, and of the arrests or detentions later. We shall declare a five-day hunger strike in sign of protest against the death of Nicolai Rogdayev and the flouting of the rights of the Anarchists. We shall continue our hunger strike until we are freed, and if compelled, we shall hold out unto our death.

The Bolsheviks can crush us, but the idea of Anarchism will triumph; it will yet lead to their downfall and the destruction of prisons; for the blood of the Anarchists is the kind of ink which Nechayev used when writing upon the walls of his casement.

How long will this brutality against Anarchists continue?

We Protest!

ZORA GANDLEVSKAYA, ANDREY ANDREYEV.

February 14, 1933.

(*"Dielo Trouda,"* No. 80, June-July, 1934. Chicago, Ill.)

TO THE GENERAL BOARD OF THE G. P. U. MOSCOW
TO CITIZEN YAGODA
FROM

GANDLEVSKAYA, ZORA BORISOVNA,
ANDREYEV, ANDREY NIKIFOROVICH

We DECLARE:

1. Our arrest in Moscow, February 14, 1933, is not only a manifestation of lawlessness but it is the sort of an event which could take place anywhere else but not in the Soviet country.

PROOF: We were legalized in Moscow on the basis of the permit granted by citizen Yagoda and conveyed to us through A. V. Shotman.

2. The tactics of systematic outrages from the day of arrest—from the day of the hunger strike declared as a protest—is only a primitive argument which runs counter to revolutionary ethics.

PROOF: (a) Hunger strikers were put in one cell with non-strikers, (b) We were kept in a cell in which there was not even room to lie down on the floor, (c) On the ninth day of the hunger strike we were picked up like so much freight and shipped out for an unknown destination.

3. Forced and artificial feeding in Astrakhan, on the 18th day of the hunger strike is an act of torture.

PROOF: Physical violence tantamount to “third degree”, plus moral outrage, qualified in the MOPR *) language as torture.

4. The last arrest was the completion of four years of permanent lynching, which already put us into the category of “disfranchised persons”.

PROOFS: (a) sentence was passed in 1929, without any trial and evidence presented against us which brought about a 17 days hunger strike on our part, (b) We are constantly subject to some sort of law by the club—secret purges, blacklist, constant hounding, etc., (c) In Saratov we were blacklisted, (d) New unwarranted arrests of all of us, who did not find it necessary to abscond, (e) Deprivation of property recalls the relations between the feudal lord and his serfs.

CONCLUSIONS:

We do not intend to live in a sort of prescribed pale, in the position of disfranchised, hounded persons who, like serfs, are attached by law to one place.

PROOFS:

(a) The last hunger strike which lasted 21 days, (b) The new on-

*) International Aid Society to Revolutionists.

coming hunger strike which is being provoked by your tactics, (c) If those "European" arguments fail to carry sufficient convincing power, you will force us to fall back up the "Asiatic" methods—Kharakiri.

Astrakhan, 5—VI—33

(*Ibid*).

NICOLAI ROGDAYEV

A Letter from Russia

Dear Comrades:

We feel deeply hurt ourselves by learning from your paper of the death of our good old Comrade Nicolai Rogdayev.

I, as his close friend and co-worker in the foregone days of the Russian Revolution, want to say a few words in the form of an obituary. To our great sorrow we cannot do it here, in this land where Comrade Rogdayev gave his best years of revolutionary activity. On the contrary, this very land, which is considered by many nowadays as Socialistic, kills in its prisons and exiles revolutionists like Rogdayev. The mere fact that Rogdayev died of hunger in the far Turk-estan exile shows the real face of Russian Bolshevism. Rogdayev is put in prison; luckily he escaped from the jail and migrated out of revolutionists.

Being yet a student in the beginning of this century, Rogdayev joined the Russian Anarchist movement where from the very beginning he has been most active. In 1907 he was sent as a delegate to the Anarchist Congress that took place in Amsterdam. After his return back to Russia he was arrested by the Tzar's gendarmes and put in prison; luckily he escaped from the jail and migrated out of the country.

Many years of his emigration Rogdayev lived in Spain and was active in the Spanish Anarchist movement and only in the time of the World War he went to Paris where he stayed till the outbreak of the Russian Revolution.

In the beginning of 1918 I met him first in Saratov. He was full of energy then.

As an experienced conscientious revolutionist his views were definite and uncompromising. In regard to the results of the victory of Bolshevism in Russia he was much less optimistic than many of his comrades; nevertheless, he propagated the necessity of fighting Denikin and other counter-revolutionists.

Being an eloquent orator he was an excellent agitator. All his life

and activity were a natural expression of a genuine revolutionist.

In 1919 he was in Samara (Central Volga) and owing to his energy and colossal mental power we had there a nice club and a good cultural centre. His lectures always attracted huge crowds of workers. At the end of 1919 the Bolshevik reactionaries closed our club and almost all of the Samaran Anarchists were jailed. At that time the Bolsheviks didn't yet dare to put their claws upon comrade Rogdayev. But he was aware of the fact that the reaction in Russia had a tendency to strengthen and that he would also be thrown into the Socialistic dungeon for not being in agreement with the Bolshevik executioners.

In 1920 I met Rogdayev again at Tashkent. Here he worked in an "Hindustan Revolutionary Committee" where he had great influence. But the Bolsheviks fearing competition disbanded the committee and Rogdayev was sent out of Tashkent.

Being deprived for a long time of communicating with anyone on this plane naturally I lost sight of Rogdayev and only in 1930 being in exile I was informed that he was being kept in the political prison of the Suzdal convent.

In the name of all comrades in Russia we energetically protest against torturing Anarchists in the Bolshevik prisons and exiles. We also urge our comrades outside of Russia to unite their protest.

We mourn the death of our dear comrade Nicolai Rogdayev, as also the death of all other revolutionists—victims of the Bolshevik regime.

APPLEBAUM and Comrades.

Russia, 2—VII—1934.

P. S.—Dear Comrades: I beg of you to translate these lines for your paper and to forward the original or translation to other Anarchistic publications.

With Comradely regards: Applebaum.

(*"Man!" A Journal of the Anarchist Ideal and Movement*,
No. 8, August, 1934. San Francisco, Cal.)

1935

THE CHRONICLE OF PERSECUTIONS

Among the thousands of victims arrested a short time ago (Social-Democrats, Social-Revolutionists, Oppositional Communists and Anarchists) are:

SANDOMIRSKY, old militant Anarchist, a political convict during the Tzarist regime; he supported the Bolsheviks to the utmost.

NOVOMIRSKY, likewise a political prisoner during the Tzarist regime, a well-known writer, capable contributor to the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, whose only crime is that he formerly was an Anarchist.

ASKAROV, a political prisoner during Tzarism; took a prominent part in the October Revolution; has been prosecuted several times already;

OTELLO GAGGI, an Anarchist, has lived for 13 years in Russia, having gone in exile from Italy. Has been in prison since January 4, 1935. Has still to undergo 30 years of imprisonment in Italy for revolutionary activities. He was sentenced without any trial whatsoever, to deportation for three years to Yarensk. Afterwards his wife was also sentenced, but not to Yarensk. Yarensk, situated 140 miles from the nearest railway, is buried under snow for 6 months of the year!

CALLIGARIS, Oppositional Communist, who sought refuge in Russia after having been sentenced several times in Italy and undergone 5 years deportation on the Islands.

MERINI, formerly representative of the Communist Young People with the Comintern; likewise an Italian militant and subjected to imprisonment and deportation there.

H. OTELLO and DI MODUGNO, both Italian emigrants.

Further, the Anarchist A. Baron has been again arrested and exiled to Tobolsk. Nothing is known yet about the fate of Cordao and Alexandrovich. Nobody knows what will become of the Italian Anarchist Petrini,*) who has been exiled to Astrakhan or of the famous Communist writer Victor Serge, deported to Orenburg.**)

*) Petrini was extradited to Fascist Italy.

***) Later on Victor Serge was deported from Russia.

the Mensheviks have been arrested Peschoff, Zacharowa, Kutchin and Isidor Ramischwili. Peschoff and Zacharwoa have been guilty of the crime of sending with some others a telegram of congratulations in connection with the formation of the alliance between the French Communists and Social-Democrats. Ramischwili, 78 years of age, was first exiled to Turkestan.

*(Press Service International Anti-Militarist Commission;
Reprinted by "Man!" Nos. 7-8, July-August, 1935,
San Francisco, Cal.)*

1936

THE C. N. T. DELEGATION IN U. S. S. R.
AND THE SITUATION OF OUR COMRADES

In the middle of October, 1936, a delegation of Spanish comrades of the C. N. T. left for U. S. S. R. Among other things the delegation took along with it, in order to present it to the proper authorities in Soviet Russia, a list of Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists who languish in the prisons and exiles of U. S. S. R. (This list was first presented to Antonov-Ovseyenko, who promised to do everything within his power to free our comrades in U. S. S. R. and to obtain for them the right to leave for Spain with their families).

It is to be noted that this list is not complete and does not include all the comrades who are tortured now in the torture chambers of Soviet Russia. The list presented by the Catalonian Regional Committee of the C. N. T. to Antonov-Ovseyenko comprises only the names of those heroes who, notwithstanding the persecution of the Soviet authorities, have sufficient courage within them to maintain connections with the comrades living abroad.

The reactions of the Soviet government to the demand of the C. N. T., and an indication of how much confidence the promises of Mr. Antonov-Ovseyenko deserve, are presented in certain letters received from Soviet Russia during the stay of the C. N. T. delegation in that country. It is to be noted that on the 20th of November, 1936, that is, just at the time when innumerable speeches were made in the so-called "free" and "happy" country about the need of rising to the defense of the Spanish proletariat, when banquets arranged in honor of the Spanish delegation overflowed with sweetness and apparent sincerity—at that very time V. Z.—one of our best comrades—was taken away from his place of exile, to which he was banished nine months ago after five years of prison confinement, and again placed under arrest, facing against the endless rounds of prison, exile and . . . prison again.

Let the following excerpts from letters sent by our comrades in U. S. S. R. tell us about the "roads to proletarian freedom" pursued by the Soviet government.

November, 1936.

. . . Life is hitting me right and left and I feel bad about starting off without any smile, without any joy. The City M. gave me quite a joyless reception—do you know what “pale of settlement” means? If you do, well, think then of a Gomel citizen who came to Moscow, let us say, in 1907-8; that will give you an idea of our situation.

The family is in a state of depression, nearing collapse, it is exhausted to the limit of human endurance, beyond which begins the purely mechanical routine—life, without thoughts, without clear perception of good and bad—“One has to live”—just that and nothing else. V. wrote me, asking me to come as soon as I can—I came and three days later we parted. Now I am again all alone, I see him once in six days, bringing him in a small basket bread, butter and tobacco—no end of tobacco. And then what of the nearest future?

This year we have an unusually “foul” autumn—I cough and spit those abominable clots (tuberculosis) and, apart from ordinary blessings, I have also contracted a nervous eczema, fortunately, showing up in places... which are not noticeable. All this, of course, is trifling—only one does long just for a little bit of happiness!!!!

**
*

November, 1936.

. . . I lead a primitive life. I am sleeping on the floor since I cannot afford to have a bed of my own. I and A. got used already to meet the winter only scantily dressed in our summer clothes. At least, if the house were warm enough. . . .

We discuss a lot the tactics of the Spanish Anarchists. And we must say that the methods of the Spanish Anarchists who found it necessary to work in the government in the capacity of Ministers either bespeak the lifelessness or utopianism of the Anarchist ideas or . . . that the Spanish Anarchists who had chosen such a course are no Anarchists at all. It is interesting to know what is the position of the “Dielo Trouda” on his question?

I.

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*

November, 1936.

Today I went to the Post Office and, unexpectedly, I received a food remittance. I guessed immediately that the sending of it was

the work of our friends. Situated as I am, this gift is always welcome to me. Thanks a lot for it. My health has improved somewhat. But A. has had bad luck. Her hand began to ache and she couldn't sleep nights on account of it.

K.

**
*

November, 1936.

Many thanks for your remittance. What a joy it was to get all that! Now I am going to tell you why I did not answer at once. Unexpectedly I obtained the chance to go to see G. I just came from there after having spent fifteen days with him. I will not write much about him: he changed so that one can hardly recognize him. As to me, I did not fare very well in the city of X. I caught a cold on the way, having gone out without a winter coat (I haven't got any) and now I am confined to bed with a high temperature.

Now that fall is approaching, my little girl's health has taken a turn to the worse (tuberculosis) but worse than that: my brother is dying and he is not only a brother to me—he is a fine, responsive comrade, but it is utterly beyond my power to help the slightest little bit. . . .

T.

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*

December, 1936.

. . . I have no news . . . the situation as to obtaining work is hopeless as ever. . . .

B.

THE ALEXANDER BERKMAN FUND TO AID THE EXILED AND IMPRISONED ANARCHISTS AND ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS OF SOVIET RUSSIA.

("Dielo Trouda," No. 96, March-April, 1937, Chicago, Ill.)

1937-1939

Terror in Russia continues. . . .

The Bolsheviks start to persecute any one who corresponds with organizations or persons.

They dissolved the Political Red Cross. Due to this fact the political prisoners and exiles are now without any outside material support and have to live on the government ration, that means virtual starvation.

More than that. We have strong suspicion that the imprisoned and exiled Socialists and Anarchists were framed together with Communists-Oppositionists and shared their fate as "wreckers," "Japanese spies," "vile Trotzkyites and Bukharinites." That, of course, cannot be ascertained now since no lists of the executed people were made public.

Here is a case giving credence to this assumption. Aaron Baron, who was serving his exile sentence in Tobolsk, was arrested in 1937 and has vanished completely ever since and his fate still remains a mystery.

A Baron's disappearance was preceded by the following circumstances:

Toward the end of 1936 the Spanish Confederation of Labor (C. N. T.), which had placed great hopes upon Stalin's aid in its struggle against Franco, sent a delegation to Moscow. This delegation had on hand a long list of the exiled and imprisoned Anarchists. The delegation asked to set free the imprisoned and exiled Anarchists in case the latter express a wish to leave for Spain. Baron was topping this list and he was the first one to vanish after the Spanish delegation left Russia.

In view of the general situation, in which the political prisoners and exiles have been placed by the Bolsheviks, we are inclined to believe, although lacking direct documentary evidence to that effect, that politicals are being executed on the quiet.

Table of Contents

PART ONE

<i>Publisher's Preface</i>	6
<i>Author's Preface</i>	13

THE SOURCES OF THE RUSSIAN TERROR

*(The Torquemada, Loyola, Machiavelli and Robespierre
of the Russian Revolution)*

I. LENIN'S ROAD TO POWER	19
II. THE ABSOLUTIST AND TERRORIST NATURE OF THE MARXIST STATE	35
III. THE "PREPARATORY" PERIOD OF TERROR	48
IV. THE BOLSHEVIK COUNTER-REVOLUTION BEGINS <i>(Second Period of the Terror of 1918)</i>	59
V. THE BLOODY ORGY OF THE MASS TERROR	75
VI. THE FIGHT AGAINST LIBERTY <i>(Terror of 1919)</i>	90
VII. THE "BLOODLESS" FRONT (1920)	113
VIII. THE SECOND YEAR OF THE "BLOODLESS" FRONT AND OF PEACEFUL CONSTRUCTION (1921)	144
IX. THE TERROR IN THE LAST YEARS OF LENIN'S LIFE (1922-1923)	200
X. THE TORTURES	242
XI. LENIN'S TERROR WITHIN THE PARTY	256
XII. STALIN'S TERROR WITHIN THE COUNTRY (1924-1939)	292
XIII. STALIN'S INTRA-PARTY TERROR	310
1. The Leader Unmasked	310
2. The Bloody Hurricane of Death	319
3. The Final Phase of the Terroristic Cycle	322
4. Formation of the New Classes and Stalin's Most Recent Intra-Party Terror	325
XIV. WHITHER RUSSIA?	330

PART TWO

DATA AND DOCUMENTS

I. ANARCHISTS IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION	
<i>(Introduction)</i>	341
II. THE PERSECUTION OF ANARCHISTS IN THE YEARS	
OF THE CIVIL WAR	379
1918	381
The Prelude	381
The April Pogrom in Moscow (<i>Government Documents and</i> <i>Release of the Government Press</i>)	383
We Look Into Documents	394
Pogroms Follow in Petrograd and in the Provinces	396
The True Reasons for the Anarchist Raids (<i>Analysis and</i> <i>Conclusions</i>)	405
1919	412
The Persecution of the Anarchists in Ukraine	412
One Day in the Che-Ka's Cellar	425
The Persecution of the Anarchists in Great Russia	436
1920	440
Documents from the Archive of the Provisional Executive Bureau of the All-Russian Confederation of Anar- cho-Syndicalists	440
1921	454
The Russian Communist Party and the Petty-Bourgeois Groupings, On the Anarchists (<i>A Circular Letter</i> <i>Sent Out by the Central Committee of the Russian</i> <i>Communist Party</i>)	454
Documents From Prisons	461
The Protest of the Moscow Anarcho-Syndicalists Organiza- tions	468

The Appeals From Taganka Prison	471
The Hunger Strike and the Deportation of Anarchists from Soviet Russia	475
Trotsky's Reply	499
An Agreement Between the Committee of the Foreign Dele- gates and the Bolshevik Government	501
The Persecution of the Anarchists-Universalists	503

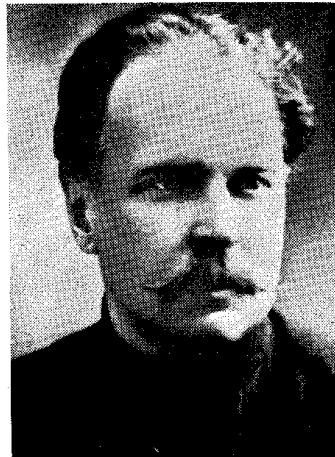
III. THE DRY GUILLOTINE BEGINS TO WORK (1922-1939)

A Year by Year Chronicle of Arrests, Persecutions and Struggles of Anarchists in Prisons and Exiles.

1922	517
1923	527
The Letters From Prisons and Exiles	532
1924	535
The Letters From Prisons and Exiles	536
1925	540
1926	544
1927	552
The Letters From Exiles	569
1928	574
The Letters From Prisons and Exiles	583
1929	585
1931	596
1932	597
The Letters From Prisons and Exiles	607
1933	614
1935	619
1936	621
1937-1939	624



LIA GOTTMAN
In prisons and exile since 1920



NIKOLAI ROGDAEV
Died in exile, Tashkent

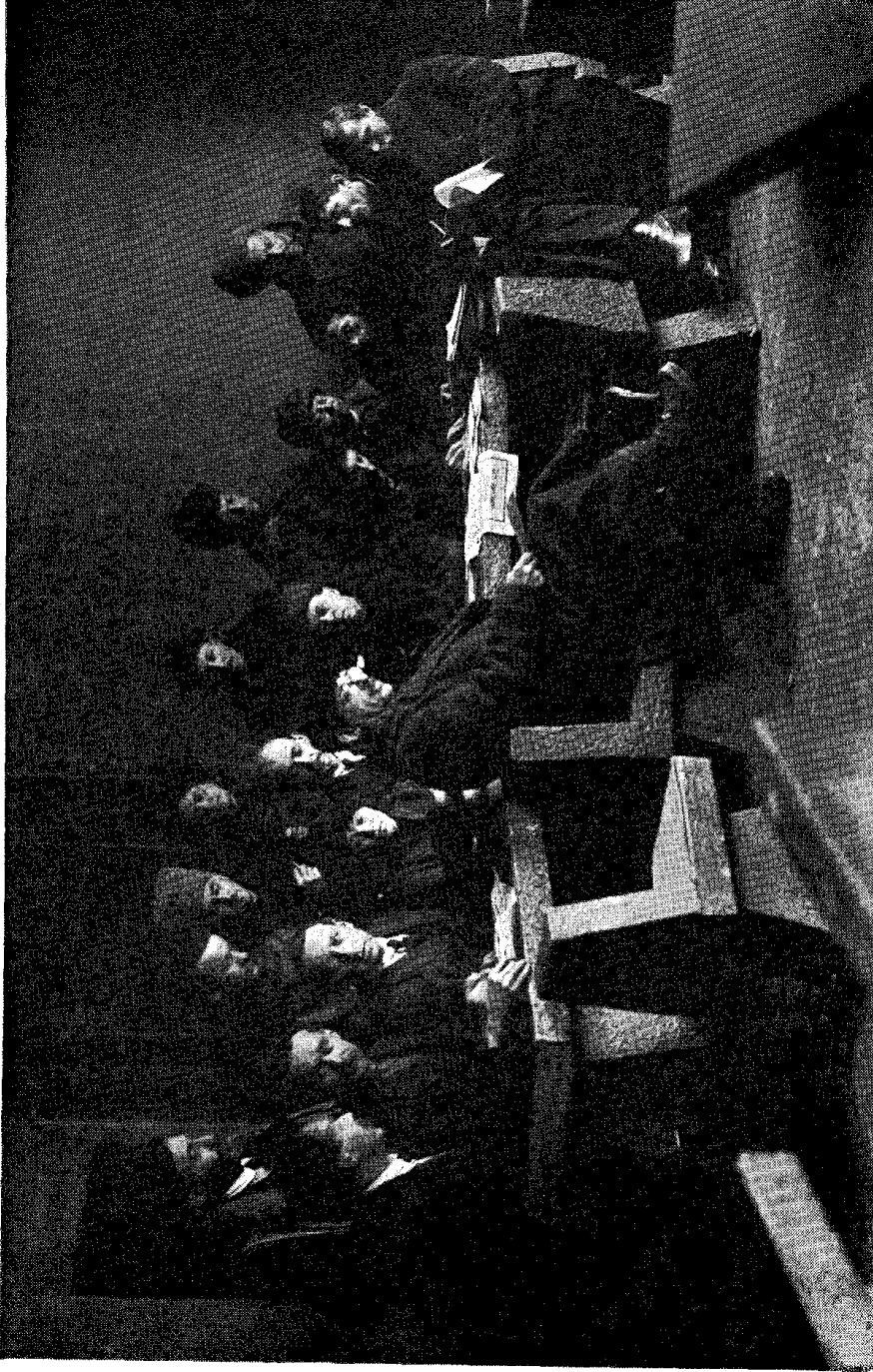


IVAN TARASIUK (KABAS)
In prisons and exile since 1920

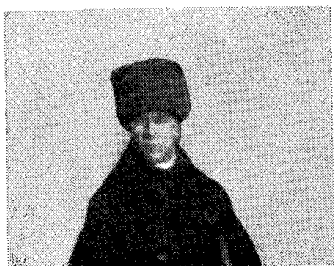


ANDREI ANDREEV
In prisons and exile since 1921

P. A. KROPOTKIN FUNERAL COMMITTEE



From left to right (back row): DR. A. A. ATABEKIAN, died in exile; MEYER RUBINCHIK, repented in exile; HERMAN SANDOMIRSKY, in prison since 1935; PETROVSKY, fate unknown; N. K. LEBEDEF, died in Moscow; EFFIM YARTOCHUK, deported in 1921 from Russia, repented; LEV CHERRY (TURCHANINOV), shot to death in 1921 in Moscow by Che-Ka; HERMAN ASKAROV, in prisons and exile since 1921; N. I. PAVLOV, repented in exile; VLADIMIR BARMASH, in prisons and exile since 1921; TANIA SHAPIRO, deported from Russia in 1922; A. M. SHAPIRO, deported from Russia in 1922; PROF. A. A. BOROVOY, died in exile in 1926; PIRO, in exile since 1926; LIDIA GOGHELIA, fate unknown; G. P. MAXIMOFF, deported from Russia in 1921; S. MARKUS, died in Moscow; ANOSOV, fate unknown.
(in front) ALEXANDER BERKMAN, left Russia in 1921, died in 1936, in Nice, France.



PROFESSOR A. A. BOROVOY
Died in 1936 in exile, Viatka



LEV CHERNY (TURCHANINOV)
Shot to death in 1921 by Che-Ka



OLGA TARATUTA
In prisons and exile since 1920



FANIA and AARON BARON
Fania shot to death in 1921 by Moscow Che-Ka.
Aaron in prisons and exile since 1920, probably
shot in 1937



HERMAN ASKAROV
In prisons and exile since 1921



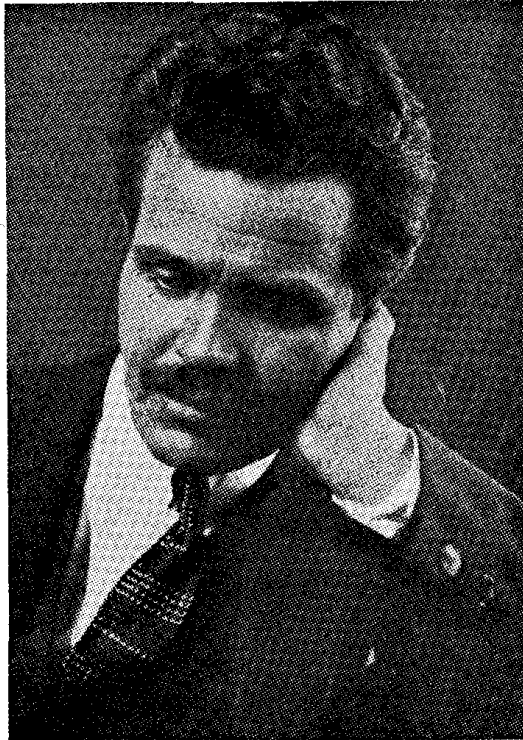
DAVID KOGAN (LITTLE CRISTE)
Secretly shot to death by Che-Ka



A. SHAPIRO (Universalist)
In prisons and exile since 1921



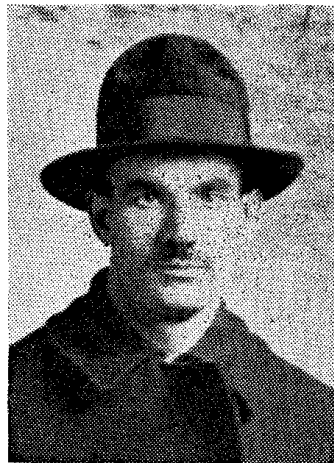
BENJAMIN EPSTEIN (NEMKA BELENKY)
Shot to death in 1920 by White Guards
in Charkov



NESTOR MAKHNO
Died in 1934 in exile, Paris, France



MILIA RUVIMSKY
Died in 1934 in Kursk exile



PETER RIBIN-ZONOV
Shot to death in 1921 by Kharkov Che-Ka